On The Cover: Big Timbers on the Arkansas
Doug Holdred image

In 1897, Colonel Henry Inman, Late Assistant Quartermaster, United States Army, wrote about Big Timbers in The Old Santa Fe Trail: The Story of a Great Highway:

“Thirty-five miles before arriving at Bent’s Fort, at which point the Old Trail crossed the Arkansas, the valley widens and the prairie falls toward the river in gentle undulations. There for many years the three friendly tribes of plains Indians—Cheyennes, Arapahoes, and Kiowas—established their winter villages, in order to avail themselves of the supply of wood, to trade with the whites, and to feed their herds of ponies on the small limbs and bark of the cottonwood trees growing along the margin of the stream for four or five miles. It was called Big Timbers, and was one of the most eligible places to camp on the whole route after leaving Council Grove. The grass, particularly on the south side of the river, was excellent; there was an endless supply of fuel, and cool water without stint.

“In the severe winters that sometimes were fruitful of blinding blizzards, sweeping from the north in an intensity of fury that was almost inconceivable, the buffalo too congregated there for shelter, and to browse on the twigs of the great trees.

“The once famous grove, though denuded of much of its timber, may still be seen from the car windows as the trains hurry mountainward.”

The book is available as an ebook on books.google.com.

Big Timbers Museum is located on the Santa Fe Trail along Highway 287 and Highway 50 one mile north of Lamar, Colorado. The museum was named for large stands of cottonwood trees that once grew along the Arkansas River. The museum features Western and Native American artifacts, Sand Creek artifacts, artifacts related to the DAR Madonna of the Trail Monument, World War I poster collection, and a transportation museum featuring antique wagons, cars, and trucks. (www.prowerscounty.net/residents/big_timbers_museum/index.php, 719-336-2472)

This location is also on the Santa Fe Trail Geocache GeoTour.
Contents

2 On the Cover: Big Timbers on the Arkansas
4 President: As I See It
5 Manager: Joanne’s Jottings
6 Bright Days and Starry Nights Along the SFT: Elkhart, KS; Boise City, OK; and Clayton, NM

7-8 Rendezvous 2018
8-9, 12, 17 Trail News
10-11 Call for Papers/Reenactors for 2021
13, 29 Membership Information
28-31 Chapter Reports
32 Calendar

14-16 It’s All About the Journey: A Mother and Son’s Geocaching Adventure along the Santa Fe Trail

By Jenny Clark with Brian Wentz

18-27 Becknell, Sibley, the Osage Trace, and More: Original & Early Routes of the Santa Fe Trail in Jackson & Lafayette Counties, Missouri: 1821-1832

by Craig Crease

Drawn by French portraitist Charles Balthazar Julien Fevret de Saint-Memin, who lived in America from 1793 until 1814, this portrait of “Soldier of the Oak,” a chief of the Little Osage, was done circa 1807. This Osage chief, also known as “Big Soldier,” was contemporary with the years of Fort Osage. In 1820 he told Fort Osage factor George Sibley...I see and admire your manner of living, your good warm houses, your extensive fields of corn...Talk to my sons, perhaps they may be persuaded to adopt your fashions...but as for myself I was born free, was raised free, and wish to die free.” Saint-Memin also did portraits of George Washington and Thomas Jefferson, among other notables. [from the collection of Craig Crease]
In this column, I will address four issues: board nominations, Symphony in the Flint Hills, significant emphases in SFTA's life and future, and Symposium 2019.

First, in the middle of 2018, we are rapidly approaching the time to nominate folks to serve on the Board of Directors beginning in 2019. I have already contacted the SFTA Nominating Committee Chair Sandy Slusher to start working with her committee to garner the approval of possible nominees to fill the expiring terms of various Board members. A person can serve for up to two (2) four-year terms as a member of the Board. We changed the bylaws several years ago to eliminate mandatory election of Board members representing each of the five states in favor of all positions being listed as “At Large”. Vice-President Larry Short has sent a letter to each of the chapter presidents asking him/her to encourage the nomination of potential members of the Board to be elected in 2019. I cannot emphasize enough how important this process is. We sincerely need strong representation from all regions of the Trail – from New Mexico, Colorado, Oklahoma, Kansas, and Missouri. We have some very, very good and knowledgeable people in all five of those states and some who live outside the immediate five-state region. Therefore, my challenges are two-fold. First, if you as a SFTA member are not a member of a local chapter, I strongly encourage you to join at least one. A Board member must be an active member of the SFTA AND a local chapter. Second, send the name of a person(s) you would recommend for consideration for SFTA Board nomination. You can send your recommendations to me, Larry Short, Joanne VanCovern, a chapter president, or Sandy Slusher. You can find the contact information in this and all issues of Wagon Tracks.

Second, Symphony in the Flint Hills for 2018 was a rousing success. More than 7,000 attended the one-day event at the Rosalia Ranch in Butler County, Kansas, on June 9. The emphasis centered on “Water,” its effects on the Flint Hills and the need to preserve the Flint Hills through careful conservation so this treasured expanse of prairie will be available for our children and children’s children and ages to come. Certainly, the nearly $100 ticket may seem extreme, but costs for the performance by the Kansas City Symphony Orchestra are necessary for program success of the non-profit organization based out of Cottonwood Falls, Kansas. If you have not attended Symphony in the Flint Hills, make plans for June 8, 2019, June 13, 2020, and, of special interest, June 12, 2021, as the theme for the 2021 event will be commemoration of the 200th year of the Santa Fe Trail. Plans already are underway for this special, one-time event.

Third, a few people have indicated we might be “pushing” or over-emphasizing certain aspects of SFTA life in articles and presentations. Some of those emphases include membership and funding. Categorically we MUST continue to emphasize these aspects of SFTA life because our very existence and the preservation of the Trail demand we continue to drive home these issues. Emphases like membership, chapter involvement, and funding must always be on our minds. It is the responsibility of each member to invite and enlist new members. It is the responsibility of each member to strengthen local chapters and the SFTA by joining and becoming an active participant in a chapter and the Santa Fe Trail Association. And it is the responsibility of each member to help discover methods to keep the SFTA prosperous.

Fourth, as we move closer to September 2019, you will read more and more information about the Symposium in St. Louis. You should not miss the opportunity to become more knowledgeable about the impact St. Louis had upon the Santa Fe Trail. The impact of St. Louis, the Boone family, Booneslick, the Missouri River, and trade along the Mississippi and Ohio Rivers can be seen as one explores the Steamboat Arabia exhibit in Kansas City. Reviewing the tombstones of Bellfountaine Cemetery in St. Louis, one realizes that the Trail history began farther east than Old Franklin. Therefore, make plans now to join us in St. Louis for the 2019 Symposium: “Gateway to Santa Fe,” September 25-28, 2019.

I’ve saved my traditional quote to the end of this article because I believe it sums up the four emphases I’ve addressed. It comes from Mark Udall.

“You don’t climb mountains without a team, you don’t climb mountains without being fit, you don’t climb mountains without being prepared and you don’t climb mountains without balancing the risks and rewards. And you never climb a mountain on accident – it has to be intentional.”

That’s the way I see it. ✪

As I See It by Larry Justice, President of SFTA
As the Santa Fe National Historic Trail GeoTour moves into our fourth year, we have received some very good news that includes a SFNHT GeoTour Souvenir, passing the 1,000 “Favorite Points” mark, a presence at GeoWoodstock, and receiving the 5-Bug Badge of Honor.

April 15, 2018, marked the fourth anniversary of the SFTA GeoTour (GT34). During those four years, we have had over 16,500 logged visitors to our 73 geocache sites. In addition, many people have visited the Trail and found our caches but may not have logged their visit on geocaching.com. Our GeoTour is one of 54 GeoTours managed through the company Groundspeak, Inc. and hosted on the website at www.geocaching.com.

There are only three GeoTours on National Historic Trails: the Captain John Smith GeoTour (GT7) with 37 cache sites, the Star-Spangled Banner GeoTour (GT9) with 24 cache sites, and the Santa Fe National Historic Trail GeoTour with 73 cache sites. What makes our GeoTour unique is the fact that it crosses through five states and is over 1,100 miles long (most GeoTours are regional and do not cross state lines). This is also what has made our GeoTour so popular; participants enjoy having the chance to visit the entire length of the Santa Fe National Historic Trail while participating on a GeoTour. Some have done it all in one trip; others have done sections at a time.

Participants have enjoyed our GeoTour so much, they have awarded us with 1,095 Favorite Points as of July 11, 2018. Favorite points are awarded by geocachers to exceptional caches they find and are used as a way to promote the cache, or allow for users to search for caches with favorite points.

As part of SFTA’s GeoTour, we encourage participants to take part in the “Passport Activity.” As participants find a cache, they are able to locate a code word at each site. Those finding at least 50 of the code words and sending that information into SFTA headquarters are rewarded with the SFTA Challenge Coin. At this reporting, SFTA has awarded 100 participants a challenge coin for visiting at least 50 sites along the Santa Fe National Historic Trail GeoTour, and 21 have logged visits to 70 or more sites.

On May 21, 2018, the Santa Fe National Historic Trail GeoTour “Souvenir” went live. The souvenirs are virtual pieces of art displayed on geocachers’ public profile and are awarded to players for any GeoTour they have completed. Once a registered user on geocaching.com has completed the Santa Fe National Historic Trail GeoTour, they will receive a souvenir on their profile page.

Our GeoTour is getting noticed by others and is being written about and promoted as a very positive experience of bringing together history, adventure, travel, and geocaching.

The GeoTour was featured in the March 2016 issue of Rider magazine, it has appeared in several geocaching blogs (including www.geocaching.com/blog and then scroll down to May 21, 2018), and on July 1, 2018, we were featured on “Geocache Talk,” a weekly podcast and live feed on the Geocache Talk YouTube channel. The weekly podcast covers “all things geocaching,” and show #105 on July 1, 2018, featured the Santa Fe National Historic Trail GeoTour, as well as the 50th anniversary of the National Trails System Act. You can watch/listen to the podcast by going to www.geocachetalk.com/shows/

Travel Bug Award
On May 17, 2018, the cache at the La Fonda Hotel, Santa Fe, New Mexico, received the following logged entry: “Travel Bug Hotels of America is proud to award this stellar cache with its highly coveted 5-Bug Badge of Honor. We hope the added exposure will bring many more Travelers your way.”

In the geocaching world, this prestigious award goes only to the very best Travel Bug Facilities in the USA, and now our cache at the La Fonda Hotel in Santa Fe, New Mexico, has been given this award.

So, what is a “Travel Bug” and just who is this “Travel Bug Hotels of America?”

A Travel Bug is a registered trademark of Groundspeak, Inc. and is used to describe a trackable dog tag used in Geocaching. It is moved from cache to cache, with a unique tracking number allowing its movements to be tracked online at www.geocaching.com.

A Travel Bug Hotel is a geocache that caters to travel bugs and is meant to...
Bright Days and Starry Nights Along the Santa Fe Trail
50th Anniversary Celebration Of National Trails Act
October 5, 6, 7, 2018
Elkhart, KS, Boise City, OK, Clayton, NM

Friday October 5, Elkhart, KS
*Registration 9-11 a.m. (CDT) Morton County Museum, 370 US 56
*Noon-Meal served at Morton County Civic Center, 400 E. Orchard St. $10.00/person
*1 p.m. –Guided bus tour of Santa Fe Trail and Cimarron National Grasslands with presentations by Elkhart Theater Group. Tour cost $35/person, duration about 2-2 ½ hours.
4 p.m. approximately (after tours)
*Quilt Show at Morton County Library, 410 Kansas
*Morton County Historical Society Museum Tours
*5:30 pm Evening meal and Prairie Larkspur program, Civic Center, $15/person

Saturday October 6, Boise City, OK
*8:30 a.m. (CDT) All day bus tour Cimarron Heritage Center, 1300 Cimarron Avenue
*Return to Heritage Center for lunch
*Afternoon Trail will feature John Carson performing at Camp Nichols. Return to Heritage Center around 5 p.m.
Lunch and all-day tour $45.00/person
Evening meal on your own or at the Star Party-5 p.m. Reservations required. $15.00/person. Meal is caseroles, vegetable, large dessert, drinks.
*7:30 p.m. Star Party programs, Camp Billy Joe, Kenton, OK. Please bring a flashlight, good walking shoes, jacket

Sunday October 7, Clayton, NM
*10 a.m. (MDT)-noon - Museum tours at Herzstein Museum, 22 S. 2nd St.
*Lunch on your own or at Catholic Church Parish Hall, 114 N. 1st Street
*Tour Santa Fe Trail sites in New Mexico on your own

Lodging
Look for lodging in Hugoton, Elkhart, Ulysses, and Liberal in Kansas; Guymon, Boise City, and Kenton in Oklahoma, or Clayton, New Mexico.

For more information
*Cimarron Heritage Center, Boise City, OK museum@ptsi.net, 580-544-3479
*Herzstein Museum, 22 S. 2nd St, Clayton, NM 88415, 575-374-2977
*Camp Billy Joe, Kenton, OK 73946, 580-261-7482

Registration Form
Bright Days & Starry Nights along the Santa Fe Trail

Name(s)_______________________________________________________________________________________________

# of attendees ____________________________ Total $

Elkhart Bus Tour________________________ $35/person _______________
Elkhart Lunch____________________________ $10/person _______________
Elkhart Dinner____________________________ $15/person _______________
Boise City, OK ____________________________ $45/person _______________
(All Day Tour and Lunch)
Star Party evening meal____________________ $15.00/person _______________

Total $$ _______________

Mail registration by September 10 to Jay Williams, PO Box 993, Elkhart, KS 67950
Phone reservations deadline—September 14 to Jay Williams 620-697-2378 or Morton County Museum 620-697-2833
October 10 is the submission deadline for the November issue of Wagon Tracks.
What’s on the schedule?

The Jefferson National Expansion Memorial has been re-named Gateway Arch National Park. The multiyear project has transformed the Arch museum, grounds, adjoining riverfront, and downtown area. The Arch, completed in 1965, commemorates St. Louis’s role in westward expansion. This is the first major renovation of the museum, which added 45,000 square feet to the existing 100,000 square feet. The museum’s storytelling was upgraded using today’s technology and multimedia. The mezzanine’s terrazzo floor features a monumental map of the westward trails from St. Louis. The museum includes exhibits from the mid-1700s to 1965 that tell the story of indigenous cultures, explorers, and pioneers. Everyone who wishes to visit the Arch may do so any afternoon during the Symposium. www.archpark.org

If the Explore St. Louis Visitors Guide, handed out during the spring board meeting, hasn’t been shared, you may visit their website www.explorestlouis.com. The visitors guide includes much information about the city, plus maps.

—Shirley Coupal, 2019 Symposium Coordinator

In Memoriam

SFTA member Rodney Booth, Cottonwood Falls, Kansas, died in May. Rod had been working on a documentary film about the Trail for several years and filmed at a number of events and locations. He especially loved Fort Larned and Bent’s Old Fort. He attended the meeting at Council Grove on April 21, and died of a stroke a few days later. Memorial donations to SFTA can be made online at www.lastchancestore.org, click on donations, fill in the information, and add "Rod Booth" in the "IN MEMORY OF" choice. His obituary is online at www.robertsblue.com/obituary/rodney-booth. The film he has taken along the Trail is planned to be donated to the archives at the Santa Fe Trail Center.

Santa Fe Trail Murals and Signs Sought

Ever get that itch you just gotta scratch, the idea that won’t go away? Mike Olsen has one of those. He’s been thinking about murals along the Santa Fe Trail, maybe on the side of bank building or inside a post office or a school. Maybe there is an old Santa Fe Trail sign, like the Coca-Cola signs painted on buildings and barns. Who knows, a stained glass window or two might also turn up. If you know of one of these, contact Mike at mpolsen1@comcast.net or Ruth Friesen at editor@santafetrail.org. If we find enough, there may be a book in the making.
There are no DAR markers on the New Mexico portion of the Cimarron Route. In search of a location that would be fitting for both a Cimarron Route marker and for the 200th anniversary of the Trail, a DAR committee approached Faye Gaines about placing a DAR Santa Fe Trail marker on her property at Point of Rocks, New Mexico, which is a Certified Site of the Santa Fe National Historic Trail. She and her family were delighted with the suggestion. The planned marker was announced on June 16 at Fort Union National Monument during the Fort Union Days event. Funds are being raised for a large monument made of red granite.

Faye Gaines and Linda Davis, another New Mexico ranch woman, who owns and manages the famous CS Ranch, were named DAR Women in American History. The award is given to honor the role that women, past and present, have played in American history. The DAR New Mexico state organization chose to honor both Faye Gaines and Linda Davis for their tireless work and dedication to the history of the Santa Fe Trail. Faye and Linda are long-standing members of SFTA and the Daughters of the American Revolution.

Tributes to Faye were also read by Santa Fe Trail Association Manager Joanne VanCoevern and President Larry Justice.
Living Historians/Demonstrators/Camps Sought for SFTA 2021 Commemoration

The Organizing Committee for the 2021 Santa Fe Trail Bicentennial Symposium is seeking the best qualified living-history interpreters and demonstrators to educate symposium attendees and the visiting public on the activities and lifestyle of those who would have been involved with the business and events on the Santa Fe Trail throughout its history but concentrating specifically on the contributions of Bent, St. Vrain & Company (1833-1849). All individuals selected for this by-invitation-only event will contribute to the symposium in first-person interactions with each other in a public history context for the benefit of symposium attendees and the visiting public, and in a manner which will meet the needs of the symposium. The committee is recruiting persons who are able to perform in this role. This is not the place for persons still learning the craft of historical first-person interpretation. If you are not an accomplished interpreter with substantial training and experience, you are asked not to apply at this time. Bent's Old Fort National Historic Site has annual training opportunities that can prepare you for this role in the future. However, see #5 below for information on special sponsored novice opportunities during this event.

In order to demonstrate the lifestyle found on the Santa Fe Trail and at Bent's Fort (1833 - 1849), the committee is seeking applications from the best Indians, laborers/herders, fort and camp traders, domestic workers, period craftsmen, clerks/owners, doctors, hunter/trappers, teamsters, trail travelers of the time and place, and military interpreters and demonstrators who will enhance the experience presented at this symposium.

By necessity, there will be a limited number of spaces available in each role.

There may also be limited opportunities to present a developed informal talk and/or demonstration throughout the symposium on the park site.

In order to insure that the most qualified, the “best of the best,” living historians/demonstrators are selected as contributors to the symposium based on established standards, their qualifications, and their willingness to provide programs, all who would like to be considered will need to fulfill at least one of the following requirements:

1. Attend a living-history education encampment held at Bent’s Fort NHS during the first week of June of odd-numbered years, and then submit a portfolio and a letter of interest and be juried so as to represent the highest quality and focus.
   OR

2. Attend and be evaluated at two Bent’s Old Fort living history events between now and the end of June 2021, and then submit a portfolio and a letter of interest and be juried so as to represent the highest quality and focus.
   OR

3. Submitted a portfolio and was successfully vetted and participated in the 2015 Fur Trade Symposium, and then submit a letter of interest and any updates on the portfolio which was sent in 2015, and be juried so as to represent the highest quality and focus.
   OR

4. Attended first person living history programming at a site or event recognized for superior programming, and then submit a portfolio to be juried as representing the needs of the event and the high quality and the focus of the symposium. Include in this portfolio the names and contact information of person(s) who can attest to your experiences at other sites or events.
   OR

5. Special application for novices. A few positions will be filled for the program by interpreters who are just starting their journey in the field. Each applicant must be sponsored by three experienced first-person historic interpreters from different historic sites and from different historic roles, with emphasis being given to past activities that reflect the potential of the applicant, work the applicant has done to begin a first-person interpretation, and a letter from the applicant illustrating why they are interested in participating in the symposium and what they hope to contribute, gain, and pass on to others to perpetuate the history of the Santa Fe Trail. All other application requirements will apply.

All portfolios to be vetted for the 2021 event must include, at least:

A. The historic documentation of role-specific materials,
historic clothing, and accouterments you will be using and a bibliography of resources used to develop and document that clothing, gear, and accouterments.

B. A series of images (photographs or DVD) that illustrate past programming showing you as an interpreter in the clothing, with the gear and accouterments described in #1 above.

C. A brief interpretive outline of the historic presentation that will be offered for the enhancement of a symposium centered on the Santa Fé Trail.

Simply put, explain to the Committee how you are able to make this Symposium a better event by what you offer.

D. Please include a list of relevant site and/or events where you have worked and/or volunteered, and any works on related topics you have had published and any professional organizations of which you are a member.

These portfolios shall be sent by mail to: 2021 Santa Fe Trail Bicentennial Symposium, Living History Committee, Bent’s Old Fort National Historic Site, 35110 Highway 194 East, La Junta, Colorado 81050 or by email to: john_carson@nps.gov.

The Symposium’s Criteria Committee shall have said portfolio and/or letters of interest on or before 1 January 2021. Once selected, a Memorandum of Understanding/Agreement will be sent to you which must be signed and returned prior to 15 March 2021. Those persons whose portfolios have been accepted and have returned their Memorandum of Understanding/Agreement will receive a formal invitation as a gratis attendee of the 2021 Santa Fe Trail Symposium by 15 April 2021.

Requests for further information, questions, or concerns may directed to John M. Carson @ 719-383-5026, at Bent’s Old Fort National Historic Site, 35110 Highway 194 East, La Junta, Colorado 81050 or by email to: john_carson@nps.gov. After the first of October 2018, please visit the 2021 Santa Fe Trail’s Bicentennial Symposium website.

Call for Papers: SFTA 2021 Commemoration

The 2021 Symposium Program Committee invites proposals for 45-minute presentations which address the development, the history, the trade, and the relationships created between the various entities associated with the Santa Fe Trail, from William Becknell’s inaugural 1821 trip to the arrival of the railroad in Santa Fe in 1880. A proposal addressing the future prospects of the Santa Fe Trail would also be welcomed.

The goal of the Symposium is to present a comprehensive examination of the Santa Fe Trail and its influences on the development of the American Identity. Special consideration will be given to proposals which support this goal.

Proposals must include a title, an abstract of up to 150 words describing the presentation, a 100-word introduction, and a resume/vitae of the presenter.

Proposals must be received by Friday, 30 October, 2020. These may be mailed to: 2021 Santa Fe Trail Association Symposium Program Committee, % Bent’s Old Fort National Historic Site, 35110 Highway 194 East, La Junta, Colorado 81050.

Persons whose proposals have been accepted will receive a preliminary invitation as a presenter and gratis attendee of the 2021 Santa Fe Trail Symposium by Thursday, 1 January, 2021.

Once selected, a Memorandum of Understanding/Agreement will be sent to you which must be signed and returned prior to 15 March 2021. Those persons whose portfolios have been accepted and have returned their Memorandum of Understanding/Agreement will then receive a formal invitation as a gratis attendee of the 2021 Santa Fe Trail Symposium by 15 April, 2021.

Selected presenters must submit a copy of their presentation cited with endnotes, with all accompanying graphics, for inclusion in the Santa Fe Trail Association’s quarterly, Wagon Tracks, to the Program Committee by Monday, 23 August, 2021, or another presentation will be chosen.

Requests for further information, questions, or concerns may directed to John M. Carson @ 719-383-5026, at Bent’s Old Fort National Historic Site, 35110 Highway 194 East, La Junta, Colorado, 81050 or by email to: john_carson@nps.gov. After the first of October 2018, please visit the 2021 Santa Fe Trail’s Bicentennial Symposium website. That website’s address will be announced in October when it goes live.
Colorado is Missing DAR SFT Markers

By Shirley Coupal

On Memorial Day weekend Jean Coupal-Smith and I explored the extreme southeastern corner of Colorado. We were looking for three missing Santa Fe Trail DAR markers placed around 1909 and not surveyed since 1984 when Mary and Leo Gamble undertook locating the Colorado markers. We located the rest of the Colorado markers in 2015. But the southeast corner of the state was daunting, and we decided we needed more information. During 30 years, landowners change, roads come and go, and the directions we had weren’t very specific.

Our first stop was the Baca County Courthouse and the County Clerk’s office. We were looking for a current plat map and the owners’ names and addresses. The most current map was done in 2016, and all the land plats we were looking for had been sold in the previous six months. (For this article we are going to use the names of the prior owners. They were long-time owners, and we are assuming those who might be able to help us would know the land plats by those names.) No markers means no GPS coordinates, so we used USGS maps.

The Witcher Ranch, known in 1984 as the Streeter Ranch, was the only place we found someone to talk to. The owner said he’d never seen an SFT marker. The marker is supposedly in the SE1/4 of Sec 11 T35S R43W. The Cimarron River runs through the southeast corner of the section.

At the James Ranch, known in 1984 as the Miles Ranch or Nine-Mile Camp, no one was around, just some cattle near the artesian well. The base remains are near the artesian well. The marker was near the middle of Sec 22 T34S R43W.

White Ranch, known in 1984 as the abandoned Springer Ranch, again had no living creatures around except some cattle. There were newer corrals and a shelter. We had actually seen this marker in 1996. That was the year we were attempting to relocate the Kansas Stateline and Point of Rock markers back to their original locations. The Gamble had the marker in Sec 14 T34S R41W, but the Baca County Clerk told us there was no Sec 14 in Colorado. We decided to assume they really meant Sec 15 T34S R41W in the E1/2. The Kansas and Colorado sections do not line up for some reason.

If anyone knows anything about these three markers, please contact either scoupal@kc.rr.com or the Santa Fe Trail Association. If you’re concerned, we are farmers’ daughters and know if you open a gate you close it, don’t run over the crops, and leave everything the way you found it.

Partnership for the National Trails System

By Marcia Will-Clifton

Outreach, 50th Anniversary Events

Events for the 50th Anniversary went into full swing with the start of summer. Memorial Day weekend, my husband Alan and I attended the 100-year dedication of the Emick Ranch just south of Lamar, Colorado. Many members of the Bent’s Fort Chapter (BFC) attended, and we all had a chance to catch up since my move back to Loveland in the summer of 2017. Pat Palmer, former BFC President, has asked to review the volunteer hours tracking procedure on my next trip to southeast Colorado.

On National Trails Day my brother Gordon Beale and I headed up to Rocky Mountain National Park for a trails service project with the Rocky Mountain Conservancy and the National Park Service trails crew. The American Hiking Society set a goal to improve 2,802 miles of trail in honor of the 50th Anniversary of the National Trails System, and all volunteers across the country surpassed the goal, improving 3,954 miles of trails. An awesome accomplishment, and a joy to see so many Americans embracing the Anniversary celebrations.

I provided information on the Old Spanish Trail from our 2015 Symposium in Santa Fe to Jordan Williams with the Cache la Poudre River National Heritage Alliance. Jordan is hiking the Colorado Trail with his family and making connections with the Overland Trail and the Old Spanish Trail. I’m very pleased that this relationship with the Cache la Poudre Alliance is moving forward so positively.

PNTS Updates from June 2018 e-News, Advocacy

175 organizations, including the Santa Fe National Historic Trail and the Santa Fe Trail Association, sent an effective letter to the House and Senate Interior Appropriations Subcommittees regarding robust funding for Fiscal Year 2019 (FY19).

The United States Senators from Missouri, Kansas, Colorado, and New Mexico stay well-connected with their e-mail newsletters. Senator Jerry Moran, Kansas, Senator Cory Gardner, Colorado, and Senator Tom Udall, New Mexico, are all passionate about our public lands. Anyone can go to their websites and register to receive the newsletters. An in-state address and zip code are required. Perhaps our chapters could share this information with their members.

REMEMBER! STUDENT PHOTO CONTEST DEADLINE IS SEPTEMBER 1.

See details in the May issue of Wagon Tracks.
Santa Fe Trail Association Membership Report

By Marcia Fox, Membership Chair

As the Membership Chairperson it is my pleasure to provide the latest membership update for the Association. Currently there are 572 members. The Association has several levels of membership. The total number of members in each level are: Individual (268), family (171), business (13), institutions (48), patron (15), youth (2), and life (55). We are proud to welcome 54 new members who have joined since the Symposium in late September 2017.

The newest members from Colorado are: Bent’s New Fort Foundation, Wiley; Tom Coffield, La Junta; and Nancy Billings Gerlock from Pueblo. From Kansas we welcome Brice Barton, Lenexa; Robert and Carolyn Bohnke, Bush- ton; Mark Brooks, Council Grove; Joe and Rita Buchanan, Council Grove; Alberta Coash, Goodland; George and Kay Elmore, Larned; Connie and Tom Essington, Council Grove; Michael Farmer, Emporia; Daniel and Donna Frese, Council Grove; Jake Bauer and Deb Goodrich, Oakley; Sandra Hartman, Council Grove; Gary Hileman, Derby; Terry Hobbs, Topeka; Mike Horn, Olathe; Rob and Julie Knoblich, Hoisington; Kelley Rudd, Saddle Rock Café, and Josh and Jan Sciacca from Council Grove; Ryan Semmel, Manhattan; Richard Stahl, Dwight; Betty and Kevin White, Elkhart; Martin and Barbara Pressgrove, Baldwin City; and Martin Zahn, Wamego.

We also extend a welcome to these new members from Missouri: Katie and Paul Compton, St. Louis; Thomas Everett, Kansas City; Steve Hart, Springfield; Kansas City Public Library—Periodical Dept., Kansas City; Danielle Lamb, Lotawana; and Jared Werges, Lee’s Summit. And we issue a warm welcome to the new members who, although a long way from the Trail, still show their love of trail history by belonging to the Association: Marusich Conchita, Napa, California; Brock Barrows, Bethalto, Illinois; and Nancy Sherer, Huntingburg, Indiana.

These members from Kansas have become Life Members of the Association as either first-time members or by having updated their status to Life Members: Gary and Louise Hicks, Overland Park; Larry and Debbie Justice, Derby; and Barbara and Karl Matz, McPherson. David and Michele Graham, Normandy, Missouri are also new members who have chosen to be Life members.

The Association is also proud to have these businesses and institutions who continually support the Trail. In Kansas: Mahaffie Stagecoach Stop & Farm, Olathe; Blackjack Battlefield & Nature Park and the Santa Fe Trail Historical Society, Inc, Baldwin City; Boot Hill Museum, Dodge City Convention and Visitor Bureau, and Kansas Heritage Center, all in Dodge City; Grant County Historical Society; Grant County Chamber of Commerce and Tourism, Ulysses; Coronado Quivira Museum, Lyons; Barton County Historical Society and Barton County Community College, Great Bend; Fort Larned NHS and the Santa Fe Trail Center, Larned; Morton County Historical Society, Elkhart; Scully Brothers, Hillsboro; Council Grove/Morris County Chamber of Commerce, Saddlerock Café, Historic Preservation Corporation and Cottage House Bed and Breakfast all in Council Grove; Ride into History, Admire; Galva Historical Association, Galva; Grant County Bank, Ulysses; Haskell County Historical Society, Sublette; and the Smoky Hill Trail Association, Hays.

In Oklahoma, the Cimarron Heritage Center is a supporter of the Trail. Colorado business and institution supporters are: Pikes Peak Library, Colorado Springs; Bent’s Old Fort National Historical Site, La Junta; Trinidad Historical Society, First National Bank, Trinidad; Bent’s New Fort Foundation, Wiley; First National Bank of Las Animas; the Bent County Historical Society, Las Animas; and Tesoro Cultural Center, Morrison.

These businesses and institutions are loyal Santa Fe Trail supporters from New Mexico: La Fonda on the Plaza, El Rancho de las Golondrinas, Historic Santa Fe Trail Foundation, and New Mexico State Library, all in Santa Fe; Shadowlands Ranch, Watrous; Zimmerman Library, Albuquerque; Village of Cimarron, the Aztec Mill Museum, and Philmont Museum all in Cimarron; Las Vegas Museum, Las Vegas; Pecos National Historical Park, Pecos; Fort Union National Monument, Watrous; and St. Vrain Mill Preservation and Historical Foundation, Mora.

Many businesses and institutions not directly on the Trail also support the Association. These are Princeton University Library, Princeton, New Jersey; Texas Tech University, Lubbock; Buffalo Gold, LLC, Goodnight, Texas; Arizona State University Poly Tech Campus, Mesa, Arizona; Allen County Public Library, Fort Wayne, Indiana; Wisconsin Historical Society, Madison, Wisconsin; and the Mariah Fund of Enoch, Utah.

We encourage you, as members of the Association, to visit these businesses and institutions as you travel the Trail and thank them for their support and membership.
I grew up in Lawrence, Kansas, in the 1970s and 80s and lived most of my adult life there while I raised my son Brian. Although I now live in Arizona, I feel at home in the Midwest. Thus, when Brian suggested to me that we take a journey through time and space by exploring the Santa Fe Trail, I was thrilled. Brian and I have always enjoyed taking adventures together, and the idea of spending a week with him exploring the Santa Fe Trail via the geocache GeoTour was exciting.

Our modern-day treasure hunting experience took us on quite a journey as we followed the old paths on modern roads (some of which we had never traveled before). This journey was deeply emotional and inwardly transformative for both of us as we reflected on how our lives in 2018 are radically different from those who had traveled this route before us. I have often thought of the 1800s as “simpler times,” but came to a deeper realization, as we discovered the authentic history of the Santa Fe Trail, that the individuals and families who came before us faced challenges that we can barely imagine.

As they left the familiar to start anew in unknown places, they had much more to worry about than we do now. For them, each day on the trail was a struggle for survival. Facing the elements, surrounded by a harsh landscape which offered few physical comforts, anxious of unseen dangers they might face, the men, women, and children who first traveled the Santa Fe Trail refused to quit. Although each traveler had his or her own motivations and was inspired by unique visions of their own futures, they were united by courage and hope. We can truly never know how much our lives are impacted by those who came before us, but on this journey, Brian and I discovered more than hidden treasures in geocaches. We found a connection we didn’t know we had to the thousands of unknown people who had traveled this way before us. The Santa Fe Trail was our transportation portal back in time.

We were initially intrigued by the Santa Fe Trail when we stumbled upon a geocache in Baldwin City, Kansas, in the spring of 2017. This geocache was part of a larger GeoTour, which contains a collection of geocaches spanning the original Santa Fe Trail route. A geocache is a physical treasure hidden by a member of the geocaching community with coordinates posted online pointing to the location of the geocache. There are millions of geocaches of various shapes and sizes hidden all around the world.

Once a geocache has been physically found, the geocacher signs and dates a paper ‘log’ which is located inside the geocache, to verify proof of finding the geocache. If the geocache container is physically large enough, there may be treasures and trinkets inside to take or swap out with your own treasures. Some of these treasures include small toys, pencils, and gemstones.

On rare occasions, a geocacher may find a special type of treasure inside the geocache container known as a travel bug. A travel bug is an identifiable treasure with a unique code which can be searched for on the geocaching website or app. (www.geocaching.com/play) The primary goal of a travel bug is to move from geocache to geocache quickly in order to travel around the world. On the geocache website or app, you can find where a travel bug has been and who currently has it in their possession. It is always exciting to find travel bugs because they have been owned by many people and have traveled thousands of miles all around the world.

The Santa Fe Trail GeoTour geocaches had many travel bugs which we swapped out for Brian’s previously-owned travel bugs along the way. After a geocache has been physically logged and treasures, trinkets, or travel bugs have been swapped out, the geocacher virtually logs the geocache and travel bug(s) on the computer for the corresponding geocache, indicating it was found and travel bugs have been exchanged. On this GeoTour, there are 73 geocaches hidden along the Santa Fe Trail. Our goal was to find these hidden treasures as we made the journey along the Santa Fe Trail following in the footsteps, or the wagon ruts, of travelers from many generations ago.

We planned our long journey over the course of several months before our departure. Brian used his engineering savvy to log geocache coordinates on Google maps, while I made travel reservations via internet websites for lodging and car rental. We were so thankful for the luxury of technology which made planning easy and could only marvel at the perseverance of the pioneers who planned their trips without these aids. Timing was of the essence, as we had over 60 geocaches to find and log into the ‘passport’ (www.santafetrail.org/geocaching.html). We planned to travel an average of 300 miles per day in four days collecting approximately ten geocaches per day to complete our trek. We learned later that travelers in the 1800s traversed on average 20-25 miles per day and took 90 days to complete their trip. This amazing feat lingered in our minds throughout our journey.

Day 1. June 20, 2018 – Independence, Missouri, to Council Grove, Kansas: Approximately 250 miles, exactly 13 geocaches, and 1 spectacular sunset

We began our voyage in Independence, Missouri, as we set out to find the first geocache, after a two-hour delay due to problems with our rental car in Lawrence. However, this did not dampen our spirits as we found humor by connecting present to past. In particular, halfway through our rental car debacle we tried finding a different car rental business in Law-
rence, which ended up being a bust. We first called ahead and were told there was an available car, but upon arrival the business door was locked with a sign on the door saying, “will return shortly, out filling up rental trucks.” While waiting there for a few minutes, other customers began showing up, also wondering why it was closed in the middle of business hours. One customer in particular was quite a colorful person. He was a middle-aged, skinny man decorated in tattoos and electronically shackled in a house arrest anklet. We got a good laugh out of that experience because it was like meeting a modern-day William Becknell, the man from Franklin, Missouri, who is credited with creating the Santa Fe Trail in 1821 while escaping his debt by taking an ‘extended business trip’ to Santa Fe, New Mexico.

Even though we had a glitch in our travel timing from the rental car fiasco, we learned that we had nothing to complain about, after reading journal entries from Frank Stahl, who wrote, “August 4, 1865. We had a hard time with the wagons. Roads very bad. Got stuck several times. Had to take the wagons apart. Had to stop and grease the wagons on the road after mishaps.” This is a theme repeated by Stahl in subsequent journal entries from August until November (1865) along the entire Santa Fe Trail. Our connection with Stahl’s struggles went beyond our attempts to secure a rental car.

In our journey, we learned there were locations along the Santa Fe Trail where you can still see trail ruts. These are preserved depressions in the earth caused by the thousands of wagon wheels [plus oxen, livestock and people] that repeatedly rolled over the trail in the late 1800s. Both Brian and I were fascinated by their continued existence! It is remarkable that the ground continues to have trail in the form of preserved ruts that have not eroded for over 120 years. We quickly joined the ranks of the “rut nuts” as we eagerly searched for rut sites.

The summer Kansas weather was warm and humid with lingering storm clouds in the distance as we approached the quaint town of Council Grove, Kansas, our final destination for day one. We enjoyed the comfort of air conditioning in our automobile, while considering the discomfort the pioneers experienced on their trek. We ate dinner at my favorite restaurant along the Santa Fe Trail route, Hays House, a National Historic Landmark. It is named after Seth Hays, Daniel Boone’s great-grandson, who came to Council Grove to trade with the Kaw Indians. The food was delicious: fried chicken, fresh salad, mashed potatoes, and corn. We learned after reading journal entries from the 1800s that Santa Fe Trail travelers had to rely on very limited food options: flour, coffee, sugar, and any wildlife they could hunt and eat. We were thankful to have plenty of delicious food without the exhausting work of preparation the pioneers experienced.

After satiating our appetites, we headed down the road to hike in the National Tallgrass Prairie Preserve. As we approached the entryway to the National Tallgrass Prairie Preserve, the sun was setting over the horizon of the Flint Hills, and I reminisced about the many days I had spent with my mom on trips from Lawrence to Council Grove to see the beautiful rolling hills of the Tallgrass Prairie. I could feel my mom’s spirit present in this peaceful place. Now I was able to share this experience with my son, and thus pass it down to the next generation.

After a leg-stretching hike, we headed back toward Council Grove to our accommodation for the night, the Cottage House. In 1867, the Cottage House began with three rooms and a blacksmith shop. Now it has 26 rooms, while still maintaining the feel of stepping back in time. The storm clouds gave way to threatening streaks of lighting and booming thunder, which were quickly moving closer to Council Grove. We made it inside just before the clouds burst into symphony. Summer storms in Kansas pull together the years of my life and connect me all the way from my childhood, through my son’s childhood, into the present moment. The storm felt oddly comforting.

After a very long day of excitement with our SFT geocache GeoTour treasure hunting, as we prepared to go to our rooms to enjoy the luxury of comfortable beds, we read one last journal entry from the 1800s which described the sleeping discomfort travelers experienced along the Santa Fe Trail. Needless to say, each of us felt more appreciative having shelter over our heads and our own dry beds.

Above: Jenny Clark near Council Grove, Kansas. Right: Brian Wentz near Overbrook, Kansas. Photos by the authors
Day 2. June 21, 2018 – Council Grove, Kansas, to Great Bend, Kansas: Approximately 200 miles, exactly 16 geocaches, 7 Trail rut sites, and 1 beautiful summer solstice.

We awoke to a beautiful sunny day with a bright blue sky, cooler temperatures, drier air, and a soft breeze. The summer storm the evening before delivered a welcomed cool front. I sat on the porch of The Cottage House relaxing in a rocking chair as I enjoyed my breakfast. We packed our bags, loaded the car, replenished the ice in our cooler, and headed west. We were excited to discover more geocache treasures and further learn about the history of the Santa Fe Trail. We appreciated the modern invention of ice to keep our travel food from spoiling and wondered how the pioneers preserved their food.

As we drove through the isolated gravel roads of Kansas, our minds traveled back 150 years to when the merchants and United States government traveled this very same route known as the Santa Fe Trail. Despite growing up in Lawrence, Kansas, we knew very little about the Santa Fe Trail. This journey meant more to us than simply geocaching. We were excited to learn about history that happened right in our backyard that has eluded us all these years. We had no clue how immense an impact the Santa Fe Trail had on the development and settlement of Kansas. We also wanted to experience firsthand the difficulties early travelers went through to make the trek. How much food should travelers take with them and how much hunting or fishing was needed? How did they know the best path to take? How did they deal with getting stuck in mud? What happened if someone became ill? Many of these problems are easily solved and taken for granted today with modern technology and conveniences, but in the mid-1800s, life wasn’t quite as easy.

Day 3. June 22, 2018 – Great Bend, Kansas, to Pueblo, Colorado, SFT Mountain Route: Approximately 420 miles, exactly 17 geocaches, 2 Trail rut sites, and 1 storm delay.

Our last day in Kansas brought us a mixed bag of emotions from excitement, to sadness, and finally to hope. We left Great Bend, Kansas, bound for Pueblo, Colorado. Little did we know we would encounter a massive storm with hail and rotating clouds while driving through small town Syracuse, Kansas. Taking cover inside a car wash, we met Rob, a fire fighter from Lenexa, Kansas, who was traveling to Colorado and was also waiting out the storm under the protection of the concrete walls and ceilings of the car wash. As we waited out the storm for about one hour, we conversed with our fellow traveler. After the storm passed and we were on the road again, we considered the travelers of the 1800s and the people they encountered on their journey.

This day also brought sadness as we learned about the conflicts and adversity between native peoples and pioneers. We stopped to walk upon the grounds of Bent’s New Fort and read about the Sand Creek Massacre. We both could feel the atrocities emerging from the earth to reveal the secrets of the story. We thought about the progress and setbacks of the injustices today in our modern world, but remembered that hope is the catalyst for mass conscious awareness and increased tolerance of differences, and that this continues to grow and evolve into the future.

We continued our journey through Days 4 and 5 to the end of the Trail.


Day 5. June 24, 2018 Santa Fe, New Mexico – End of the Trail: 5 geocaches and 1 adventure of a lifetime.

For me, this trip opened a window of insight into the famous saying that “life is a journey, not a destination.” In our 21st-century travels together along the Santa Fe Trail, my son and I connected on this journey in new ways; learning, growing, changing, and strengthening our relationship, parent to child and adult to adult. What a joy to share this experience together, mother and son!

(Jenny) “There is something about connecting with the past that makes you feel” …(Brian)…more connected with the present.”

If you, too, are excited to journey in open natural spaces, travel back in time, and explore how the past and present are interconnected, you will have the adventure of a lifetime along the Santa Fe Trail! 

Wagon Tracks August 2018
Opportunity to Write for Oklahomans

By Mary Conrad
Scholarly Research Committee

When I attended Oklahoma Research Day with SFTA President Larry Justice in mid-March, I learned what Justice already knew, since he had lived in that state many years. As we promoted the Santa Fe Trail at an information table in the city of Enid, time and again individuals of all ages did not know that the historic Santa Fe Trail crossed their state. In fact, when we uttered the word “trail”, many immediately wanted to talk about the Chisholm Trail. At an Oklahoma travel center, I had noticed a travelers’ guide for the entire state, but I could not find a single mention of the Santa Fe Trail. When I returned home, I found the online Encyclopedia of Oklahoma History and Culture, published by the Oklahoma Historical Society, has a one-page article on the historic road.

Justice, who formerly taught at Northwestern Oklahoma State University in Alva, introduced me to Eric Schmaltz, a Northwestern history professor. Schmaltz would like to spread the word about Oklahoma history topics, including the Santa Fe Trail. He is co-editor of NWICS Civitas: The Journal of Citizenship Studies, an interdisciplinary print and online journal that publishes articles about past and present issues related to Oklahoma.

Many SFTA members already would know SFT topics of interest to Oklahomans. The Cimarron Route, which was the Santa Fe Trail before the Mexican-American War, began in what is now western Kansas and crossed into what became the Oklahoma Panhandle. Due to the 50-plus miles of little water, many travelers on the Cimarron Route welcomed the Aubry Cutoff that shortened the waterless miles and aimed to lessen Kiowa and Comanche encounters. Did intense bison hunting and the construction of railroad tracks increase Native American signs of displeasure in southwestern Kansas and the Oklahoma Panhandle? As the tracks moved westward, when did use of the Cimarron Route cease in what is now the state of Oklahoma?

Many SFTA members surely know a great deal about major SFT Oklahoma spots. After the trail entered what is now Oklahoma, the route crossed to the south side of the river before travelers would have stopped at several campsites. After the Willow Bar campsite, wagons passed on either side of Wolf Mountain. The self-explanatory Autograph Rock is near Cold Spring. Beyond that famous rock, military parties from Camp Nichols provided protection to travelers for a few months in 1865. While many of these historic sites are on private lands, numerous sets of ruts can be seen near historical markers.

You know of the people who crossed what is now the Oklahoma Panhandle. What does the Sibley Survey say about that part of the Santa Fe Road? Who shared the trail with the traders?

Present-day writers also could look for SFT-related resources in other parts of the state. Just one example would be a painting of wagons in Cimarron country, placed in the state capitol on the fourth floor outside the Senate lounge and dedicated in 2005.

Please do consider writing one or more articles for inclusion in NWICS Civitas. [Editor: also for Wagon Tracks] If you search Google with the name of the journal and “submission guidelines,” you may find the requirements for your submission. If not, go to the following: www.nwosu.edu/school-of-arts-and-sciences/social-sciences/civitas. If you have further questions, please query Eric Schmaltz at ejschmaltz@nwosu.edu.
Becknell, Sibley, the Osage Trace, and More
Original & Early Routes of the Santa Fe Trail in Jackson & Lafayette Counties, Missouri: 1821 to 1832

By Craig Crease

In September 1821 the one-month-old State of Missouri extended its settlement west to the little village of Franklin, snug on the left bank of the Missouri River in the middle of the new state.

Beyond Franklin was the frontier. In what would eventually become Missouri’s westernmost counties on the Missouri River, Lafayette and Jackson Counties, there was no town of Waverly, no Dover, no Lexington. No Independence, no Westport, no Kansas City. There was little except Fort Osage on the right bank of the Missouri River in what would become the northeast corner of Jackson County, and Francois Chouteau’s fur trading post on the river near the northwest corner. A few frontier settlers dotted the landscape. There was just one road on the ground, the skinny footpath called the Osage Trace, leading from the Arrow Rock crossing of the Missouri west to Fort Osage. There was the slightest wisp of the beginning of another trail, what would come to be known as the Missionary Road running south-southwest from Fort Osage. Two invisible political lines were tied to the fort. One was the Six Mile reservation, the “two league square” established in 1808 and reserved for the fort and future white settlement. The other was the Osage Treaty line of 1808, running due south from the south gate of Fort Osage.

Other than this, there were just waves and waves of tall grass and wildflowers for miles, tall trees marking the course of creeks and streams and mighty rivers like the two Blues and the Missouri running wild and unrestricted across the landscape. This is what faced William Becknell and his little band of five as they made their way to Fort Osage that September.

The Osage Trace

The Osage Trace was the Original Santa Fe Trail of 1821 in Lafayette County and Eastern Jackson County. This is the route that Becknell and his men followed west to Fort Osage.

The Osage Trace was only a few feet wide, beaten out by the moccasins and horses of the Osage tribe as they made their way single file from their village near present Malta Bend, Missouri, to Fort Osage. The Osage Trace may well have existed before 1808, when at that time the Osage could seek hunting grounds west of the mouth of the Kansas River unrestricted by a treaty. But certainly after 1808 the Osage Trace was in continual use by the Osage making their way to and from the fort.

Though a thin brown line, the Osage Trace was recorded into the field notes and survey maps of the earliest surveyors in the field. For instance, one surveyor in this area in 1818 noted the Osage Trace where it crossed his surveyed section line as “4 links wide, bears NE and SW.” A link in the surveyor’s chain was about eight inches, so the width of the Osage Trace here was about 32 inches, or just over two and a half feet. A footpath.

To say that Becknell and his men, on horseback, followed the Osage Trace to Fort Osage is not to imply that they rode right on top of it, though they undoubtedly did at times. More likely they kept the Osage Trace close and in sight, knowing it would lead them right to the fort. Furthermore, Becknell knew this was the way to Fort Osage before he undertook his famous 1821 journey. He had lived in the Boone’s Lick country and the Franklin area since at least 1816. In December of 1816 he formed a partnership with Ira and Julius Emmons that contracted with Joseph Robidoux to take a keelboat to Fort Osage loaded with Robidoux’s supplies for sale to the fort’s military garrison. Robidoux in turn was to allow Becknell and his partners to load the keelboat with additional salt and supplies they would purchase for resale to the fort. Robidoux defaulted and did not provide the keelboat, and the project was stillborn. Yet Becknell’s partnerships with the Emmons brothers continued in local freighting up to 1819. Becknell knew the location of Fort Osage and how to get there.

The Osage Trace ran northwest from the Arrow Rock crossing of the Missouri River on and near modern Highway 41 in Saline County before turning north and passing modern Marshall, Missouri, on the east and north by several miles. Continuing a westerly course near modern Malta Bend and through modern Grand Pass, the Osage Trace turned to the southwest at Grand Pass and coursed through modern Lafayette County.

In his journal Becknell described the Osage Trace he was following in the earliest days of his 1821 journey:

“We proceeded on our journey over a beautiful, rolling prairie country, … crossing the Petit Osage Plain 6 which is justly accounted one of the most romantic and beautiful places in the State. The traveler approaches the plain over a very high point of adjoining prairie; suddenly the eye catches a distant view of the Missouri on the right and a growth of lofty timber adjoining it about two miles wide. In front is a perfectly level, rich, and beautiful plain of great extent. … On the left it is bounded by a branch of the La Mine river,8 which is handsomely skirted with timber, while still further in this direction the view is bounded by the fanciful undulations of high prairie.”

The Osage Trace crossed Tabo Creek six miles south of the Missouri River, and five miles south of the crossing of Tabo Creek that would develop after 1821 on a “new” section of the Santa
Fe Trail. That new trail would leave the Osage Trace at Grand Pass and continue west along present Highway 65 and Highway 24 through to Lexington. Founded in 1822, Lexington soon gained favor as a river landing and outfitting point, especially after James Aull opened his first outfitting and general store there in 1825. Lexington was the magnet that pulled this line of the Santa Fe Trail off of the Osage Trace at Grand Pass.

Lexington still needed to connect to Fort Osage, however, and soon after 1822 two roads from Lexington connected with the Osage Trace that was running westerly some five miles to the south. One route ran south from Lexington to meet with the Osage Trace five miles south. The other route followed the right bank of the Missouri River southwest for about seven miles to meet the Osage Trace a mile south of modern Wellington at or very near the modern intersection of Highway 24 and Highway 131.

From that intersection, or actually immediately south of it, the Osage Trace is a gravel and hardpan dirt Lafayette County road that follows the high ground for about seven miles west to Fire Prairie Creek just across the county line in Jackson County. The deeply cut banks of this road in many stretches are a testament to the years of heavy traffic it received after Becknell followed it in 1821. Today this seven miles of road is designated by Lafayette County as Old Santa Fe Trail on street signs, and the Missouri River Outfitters Chapter of the Santa Fe Trail Association has marked the route with limestone post markers.

About a half mile past Road D, the Osage Trace passes the headwaters of Hicklin Branch, a creek that flows into the Missouri River north of this head of the Hicklin Branch. It is named for the Hicklin family that was in this area as early as 1817. The Hicklin name is an important geographic marker. As the road passes the Hicklin Branch and comes to its intersection with Pleasant Prairie Road a quarter mile west, the Osage Trace continued northwest, while a different road, no longer in evidence at this intersection, branched off to the southwest. This is Hicklin's forks of the road, so designated by the officials of nascent Lafayette County in the early 1820s, as the point where the Blue Spring route of the Santa Fe Trail branched off to the southwest and gave early Santa Fe traders another route to get to the Kansas prairie. This is the second of the important early routes created and in use by 1823. We will return to this Blue Spring route of the Santa Fe Trail later in this article.

The Osage Trace continued down off the high ground at Fire Prairie Creek, now in Jackson County coursing northwest toward Fort Osage. The trail approached N. Schuster Road, which runs north at the base of a long ridge that was the right bank of the Missouri River thousands of years ago. The long-time landowners in this area have stated that farmers in this bottom land between N. Schuster Road and the current Missouri River, when digging wells or trench silos, repeatedly dug into deep layers of ancient alluvial river sand. The Osage Trace crossed onto this high ground west of N. Schuster Road by crossing that road about 850 feet south of E. Reber Road at a lower point just before the ridge steepens to the north.

The Osage Trace coursed west directly under E. Reber Road from N. O'Donnell Road to N. Johnson Road. About midway on this road, on the north side, is the location of a well-known inn on the Osage Trace, though by the 1830s the Osage Trace in this area was known as the Santa Fe Trail. Known as “Prairie House” and “Hambright’s Station,” it was built in 1833 by John Hambright, who had moved to the area from Kentucky. This trail inn lasted for almost three decades, until it was burned down by Union Troops in the Civil War. During that war Hambright rode with Quantrill’s guerrilla raiders.

Numerous travelers on the trail found their way to Hambright’s door. One lady posted this notice in an early newspaper: Lost a fur muffler or collar somewhere on the Santa Fe Road between Col. Hambright and the store room of John Ish. The finder will be liberally rewarded by leaving it at Col. Hambright’s or the store of Huggins & Noland in Independence.

The Osage Trace came to an important intersection as it continued its final northwest approach towards Fort Osage. North of E. Reber Road about a thousand feet, and east of Buckner-Tarsney Road a bit less than that, the Osage Trace crossed the Osage Treaty line. In 1808 the Osage Treaty line was established at Fort Osage, signed

![Fort Osage](image)
and executed by William Clark and Pierre Chouteau. With this treaty the Osage Indians ceded their lands east, north, and south of Fort Osage, as well as the Six Mile square west of the fort. This 1808 treaty line, which ran 255 miles south from the gate of Fort Osage, was surveyed in 1816 by Joseph Brown. In 1825 he returned to this exact point, 1.75 miles south of the gate of Fort Osage, where the Osage Trace crossed the Osage Treaty line he had surveyed nine years earlier. From this precise location Joseph Brown commenced the 1825 federal survey of the Santa Fe Trail, commonly referred to as the Sibley survey.

The 1808 treaty held for 17 years, until 1825 when George Sibley and two other commissioners, Benjamin Reeves and Thomas Mather, signed and executed a treaty at Council Grove compelling the Osages to concede land holdings that included the twenty-three mile wide strip that ran from the 1808 treaty line west to the Missouri state line. This 1825 treaty also opened the Six Mile reservation around the fort to settlement. Arrived at Fort Osage, noted Becknell in his journal in September 1821, we wrote letters, purchased some medicines, and arranged such affairs as we thought necessary previous to leaving the confines of civilization.16

In conclusion, the Osage Trace was the route of the Original Santa Fe Trail in 1821 because this is the route that Becknell and his five men followed that year from the Arrow Rock northwest to Grand Pass, then southwest through the Petit Osage Plain and around the southward bend of the Missouri River to Fort Osage. By 1822, however, Lexington was beginning to exert influence as a riverboat landing and outfitting station, and that influence soon began to pull trader traffic off of the southwest coursing Osage Trace at Grand Pass, compelling traders to pursue instead a due west course through and near modern Waverly and Dover to Lexington. This established that westerly route to Lexington as the Santa Fe Trail, effectively casting into limited use, and eventually into disuse, that portion of the Osage Trace that ran southwest from Grand Pass through the Petit Osage Plain to a point five miles south of Lexington.17

Yet the part of the Osage Trace that ran from the Arrow Rock to Grand Pass, as well as the part that ran from south of Wellington around the south bend of the Missouri River to Fort Osage, remained in use as the route of the Santa Fe Trail for the next several decades, until the riverboat landings and outfitting stations of Independence and Westport ultimately dominated and received most of the trade coming from the east.

The Original Santa Fe Trail from Fort Osage to the Missouri State Line

Archibald Gamble, Secretary on the Sibley survey, described the Original Santa Fe Trail west from Fort Osage in 1825: The road commences a mile or two south of Fort Osage, upon a line run some years ago as the boundary of the Indian lands....It follows the neighborhood road until it crosses the Little Blue Creek; it then enters upon those extensive prairies which reach, without intermission, to the Mountains of New Mexico. At the distance of 26 miles from Fort Osage, the road crosses another stream of the Missouri, called Big Blue, a creek about 20 yards wide, and which, at the season of high water, might require a ferry boat. After crossing the creek, the route pursues the ridge which divides the waters of the Kansas from it, and which ridge continues on in a good direction....18

The Original Santa Fe Trail coursed west from near Fort Osage on what had been the Osage Trace in 1821, but was now Gamble's neighborhood road. In fact, by 1825 it was also known as the Six Mile road, as it bisected the middle of Fort Osage's Six Mile reservation. The only settlers on this Six Mile road in 1825 were the Walker family, Tennessee transplants led by brothers Joseph R. Walker and Joel P. Walker in 1819 to this location about a mile southwest of the fort.19

Running in a sweeping half-mile arc for almost five miles west of the 1808 Osage treaty line, the road turned northwest to cross the Little Blue River at the later 1830s location of the Blue Mills.20 George Sibley described the crossing of the Little Blue and beyond to the state line in his daily journal of the Sibley survey:

Friday, 29th July, 1825 – I pursued the track of the Road party. Crossed the Little Blue, at a place that may be made pretty good, Eight Miles from Fort Osage – then thro’ a Small Prairie – then thro’ the Woods...Distance from Fort Osage about 18 Miles.

Saturday, 30th July, 1825 – Very fine Morning. Started early. Rode about ½ mile and entered a Prairie – The Wagon Road very plain – then 8 miles and Crossed Big Blue. Then 7 Miles to a Small Grove of Hy coer, where I halted till near Night, & caught 30 or 40 fish. So far today nearly all Prairie – good road – the flies very bad. 21

Sibley was leading the federal survey of the Santa Fe Trail in that year of 1825, just four years after Becknell's groundbreaking 1821 journey, and only three years after Becknell brought three loaded wagons and 21 men west to Santa Fe in 1822 that further blazed the trail on the ground. The above passages from Sibley’s journal show that he was riding to catch up with his survey team that had started west ahead of Sibley from Fort Osage 12 days before.

After crossing the Little Blue River, the Original Santa Fe Trail coursed south about a half-mile east of the future site of Independence. The route crossed modern I-70 just east of Chrysler Street, and fell onto the high ground of the Blue Ridge, following the ridge through modern
Raytown before leaving the Blue Ridge at the west edge of Raytown and dropping down into the valley of the Big Blue River, and the crossing of the river, into modern day Swope Park. From there Sibley rode five miles to the state line, crossing the line exactly nine miles and ten chains south of the mouth of the Kansas River. His journal entry above of July 30, 1825, indicates he was two miles past that point on the state line.22

Along with following the route of his “road party,” Sibley was following the Original Santa Fe Trail of 1821 that Becknell followed from Fort Osage west to the state line. Sibley knew Becknell personally. He wrote respectfully of Becknell before the 1825 survey:

I believe the honour of the first enterprise of this sort belongs to William Becknell, a man of good character, great personal bravery, & by nature & habit hardly and enterprising. His pursuit immediately previous to his first trip to Sta Fee was, as I am informed, that of a salt maker. He certainly had no knowledge of mercantile concerns, & is tho’ very shrewd and intelligent, very deficient in education. His outfit consisted of a few hundred dollars of coarse cotton goods…..They left our frontier at Fort Osage… 23

Becknell’s contributions to the Santa Fe Trail were not all in the past in 1825; he delivered government mail to the members of the Sibley survey party far out on the Kansas prairie, and he led a relief team that brought desperately needed oxen, horses, salt, and beef cattle to members of the survey group. He undoubtedly provided information about the route he had followed in 1821 to the Sibley survey members. Members of the survey team referred to him affectionately and respectfully as Capt. Becknell.24

The Blue Spring Route of the Santa Fe Trail

By 1823 Santa Fe traders were also following another route through modern Jackson County. This Blue Spring route actually found its genesis in another road, the north-south running Missionary Road that was created in 1821 to move goods and supplies from Fort Osage south to the Harmony Mission, started that same year in August some 80 miles south of the fort near an Osage village close to modern day Papinsville, Missouri in Bates County. At about the same time Fort Osage established a sub-factory25 to trade with the Osage at Harmony Mission as well as at Fort Osage, and the sub-factory needed to be supplied as well.

Santa Fe traders could approach the Blue Spring route two ways. They could leave from the Fort Osage area and follow the Missionary Road south to the Blue Spring rendezvous.26 Or, especially for traders from Lafayette and Saline Counties and others east of Jackson County, they could leave the Osage Trace and Original Santa Fe Trail at Hicklin’s forks of the Road, and take this route directly southwest to the Blue Spring rendezvous, bypassing the fort. From the Blue Spring the traders continued south on the east side of the Little Blue River, following near and around modern day Highway 7, avoiding the numerous heads of the Little Blue until ultimately turning west and leaving the Missionary Road and traveling several miles west to the crossing of the Big Blue River near modern-day 151st Street and State Line road.27

Stephen Cooper, pilot of the Sibley survey and scion of legendary trailblazers in their own right, the Coopers of Howard County, recalled his first encounter with the Blue Spring in 1823: At this point I left my brother, as I had promised some Santa Fe traders to be back by the 5th of May. On reaching the Missouri settlement in Lafayette County, I met the Santa Fe traders, thirty in number. I informed them that I would be with them in eight days; I was then within a day’s ride of my home, in Howard County. The party waited at the Blue Springs, in Jackson County; when I came back to them, I unceremoniously took charge of the party. We reached Little Arkansas the 31st of May.28

In 1824 M.M. Marmaduke, starting from Franklin, traveled with the largest group to date making their way to Santa Fe, a group led by the enigmatic Alexander LeGrand. Marmaduke’s daily journal reported May 24th, 1824: Remained making the necessary rules and regulations for the government of the company…..We this evening ascertained the whole strength of our company to be 81 persons and two servants; we also had 2 road waggons, 20 dearsborns, 2 carts and one small piece of cannon. The amount of goods taken with us is supposed to be about $30,000. We have with us about 200 horses and mules.

The next day Marmaduke’s journal plainly reports that this large group is traveling the Blue Springs route of the Santa Fe Trail: Traveled 10 miles to Blue Springs, and passed over a prairie country uneven and rolling, but of fine rich soil. This day we traveled the Missionary road.29

A letter to the Missouri Intelligencer that May confirmed their route from the Blue Spring. The printed letter, headed Camp on the Missionary Trace, 10 miles south of Fort Osage described the route from the Blue Spring. The group would follow the missionary trace one day’s journey, for the purpose of heading the Blues and shall strike our course between the dividing waters to the Arkansas.30

One year later, starting from Franklin, Dr. Rowland Willard traveled with another large group of Santa Fe traders on the Blue Spring route of the Santa Fe Trail. From his daily journal of May 16th, 1825: Morning fine. Encamped last night under tent for the 1st time in my life. Took leave of the company and proceeded 10 miles to the blue Springs the place of rendezvous…..Found a plenty of venison at this place killed by some of the company.
Above is the original manuscript survey of the north part of Range 50, Township 30 of Jackson County, Missouri, done in the field in November and December, 1826. The road showing on this survey, that is referred to in this study as the Osage Trace / Original Santa Fe Trail of 1821 (as well as Archibald Gamble's neighborhood road) is designated by the surveyor with three different names; as the Road from Walkers Ferry and Liberty (in section 5), as the Road to Lexington (in section 11), and as the Osage Trace (just east of section 13). Independence will not exist for another year and a half. Four year old Lexington lies on the Missouri river to the east, and same-age Liberty sits on the Missouri to the west.
Willard years later recalled: *At the Blue Springs we found in waiting 4 men whose names were Stone, Glass, March, & Andrews, who desired to accompany us for the purpose of hunting & trapping on the head water of the Rio del Norte…. Glass was quite advanced in life probably 75. He was by birth a Highland Scotch man, & still retained the kilts & cap of his native country.*

During the summer of 1825 the Sibley survey of the Santa Fe Trail was making its way west. Thomas Mather, one of the three commissioners with the survey, noted Dr. Willard’s party and the Blue Springs route with this entry in his daily journal on July 22nd, 1825: *Friday 22 Set out early and traveled 9 miles. – the flies continuing to annoy us very much. Breakfasted and remained during the day. This morning we intersected the waggon road of the Santa Fe traders who went out in the spring – They had gone round the head of the Blue.*

George Sibley, who finished the survey of the Original Santa Fe Trail in Jackson County in 1827, determined to survey the Blue Spring route from west to east. However, lightning struck his tent on a rain-soaked day in July and blew out his compass, effectively ending the survey. Sibley wrote in his field notes, however, the route as he knew it: *The road is extremely crooked from this camp to the Blue Spring. Distance as near as I can estimate it from this point to the Blue Spring is 23 miles. From the Blue Spring to Hicklin’s forks of the road is called 15 miles.*

Traders continued to use the Blue Spring route through the 1820s, but with the founding of Independence in 1827, the traders began to favor the new county seat as their rendezvous and outfitting point. By the early 1830s, the use of the Blue Spring as a rendezvous point was discontinued. Various aspects of that route south and west of the Blue Spring, however, evolved and were still used by the traders. In fact, the crossing of the Big Blue River at today’s 151st and State Line Road was still in use as late as the mid-1840s. *34*

**The Lexington Road**

Missouri became the 24th state on August 10, 1821. Jackson County, Missouri, was established December 10, 1826, and by the following summer the county seat of Independence was established. Located on high ground in the midst of numerous springs, and just four miles south of the Missouri River, Independence soon flourished.

In 1827 Independence had just one road running east from it. The Six Mile road coursed from the Little Blue River in a sweeping half-moon arc east for five miles to the area of Fort Osage. The road dropped southeast on the Osage Trace that coursed around the bend of the Missouri River which divided Jackson County and Lafayette County, and followed it up the other side to Lexington.

The new county officials wasted no time that summer of 1827 to try to establish the Six Mile road as an official county road. On June 1, 1827, a request for a review of that road was entered in the court records, and road commissioners were assigned.

The report of the road commissioners came back to the county court on September 3, 1827:

*We the persons appointed by the within order of the Court to view and lay out the Road therein mentioned do report that in pursuance of the said order we have viewed and laid out do report for Public use the following to-wit: beginning at Joel P Walkers on the six mile from thence to the crossing of the little blue the old route with the alteration of about two hundred & fifty Yards at Joel walkers Houses which we marked out… the distance we suppose to be Eleven or twelve miles, as the nearest and most Practicable Route from Joel P Walkers to the town of Independence….*

The road, now running from Independence to the Fort Osage area and then on into Lafayette County, of course followed the Original Santa Fe Trail at the time when Fort Osage was the only jumping-off point for the trail. In 1827 Independence was active, and its Lafayette County counterpart Lexington had been so since 1822. In 1827 Fort Osage was in private hands as George Sibley tried to sustain it as a private trading venture, since the federal government had dissolved the factory trading system in 1822. *37* Now the main outfitting point for the Santa Fe traders would be Independence, and to a lesser degree, Lexington and towns east.

Lexington was not only the county seat of Lafayette County, it was the location of the Federal land office for western Missouri. Additionally, early Independence was dependent on Lexington as its closest supply source. Civic leaders in the new county seat soon recognized it needed to facilitate bringing Santa Fe traders from the east to Independence to outfit. They realized a straighter and more efficient way between Lexington and Independence would be to bypass the long slow half-moon arc of the original old road and cut a road straight across the county, until they intercepted the original road coming down from the northwest at Fire Prairie Creek, near the Lafayette County line. But it took them a few years to accomplish it.

By 1831 this straight east-west route to Lafayette County looked more and more advantageous, especially for drawing those Santa Fe traders from Lexington and points east through Independence. On February 6, 1832, the Jackson County officials made their first move to that end:

*Praying for the appointment of suitable persons or reviewers, to view and mark out a road, from the Town of Independence to the Western boundary line of Lafayette County. Crossing little Blue Creek at the old Santa Fee trail east of James Blakleys. thence running through the six mile to the bridge on fire prairie Creek– thence to said West line of Lafayette County.*
But not till May 6, 1833, did the county court finally codify the route officially. The last sentence of the commissioners’ report is instructive: ……[the road] intersects with the new part of Fire Prairie road , we do believe the road can be nearer than the old Fire Prairie road we mean from Independence to the county line.

That same day the county court made it official: Which said report is here received by the Court and the road therein designated declared a public highway and the court orders that the clerk of this court advertise the same according to law.39

So the Lexington Road was created. Today the Lexington Road still exists in many places, often paved with old cracked asphalt, sometimes grassed over, sometimes lost directly under the pavement of modern Highway 24 from the Little Blue River to the Lafayette County line.40

Along with the modern traces of this historic route that show the due east-west course of this 185-year-old route of the Santa Fe Trail, three additional modern indicators mark it as such. Three Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) markers are placed east-to-west on the Lexington Road, from the Little Blue river east to Fire Prairie Creek. They are located at Salem Church, Buckner, and Levasy.

The Salem Church marker sits on a small plot of land, a little pocket park, on the west side of the modern intersection of Lexington Road and Blue Mills Road, on the immediate north side of Highway 24. On the east side of the intersection is the Salem Church. The marker was placed here by the DAR in 1909. In 2016 interpretive exhibits were added; three upright wayside exhibits, produced in a cooperative agreement that included the National Park Service, the State of Missouri, the Santa Fe Trail Association, and its Missouri River Outfitters chapter.

In 1909, of course, Highway 24 was not here; nothing was except the Salem Church, packed dirt Blue Mills Road and Lexington Road, and the marker. The marker sets the dates of the life of the trail: 1821 – 1872. With this marker the DAR marked the Lexington Road as the Santa Fe Trail, and likely believed they were also marking the trail represented by the Blue Mills Road, although all indications are that this little part of Blue Mills road that terminates at Lexington Road postdates the trail era in this area.

From the Salem marker the original Lexington Road stretches west, paved for about a quarter-mile before it disappears in the Independence suburbs. From the marker east, down Highway 24 about a mile, the now-paved original Lexington Road emerges from the Highway 24 pavement on the south side, and courses east another paved half mile to the crossing of the Little Blue River. Here the Lexington Road ran near the top line of the 1825 homestead property of Harmon and Suzanne Gregg. The Greggs probably came early to Jackson County because, like other 1825 settlers, they anticipated the Osage’s rights to the remaining land in Jackson County were about to be abolished. The Greggs brought with them their two sons, Jacob and Josiah Gregg, years before young Josiah would gain fame with the publication of his classic Commerce of the Prairies.41

The crossing of the Little Blue River by the Lexington Road was the site of a pitched battle on October 21, 1864. Forces of General Sterling Price engaged Union troops in the Battle of the Little Blue, after marching almost 10,000 Confederate troops across the state of Missouri and through Jackson County all the way west on the Lexington Road. Price’s Confederates pushed Union troops back to Independence, and ultimately to Westport, where the tide of the three-day battle finally turned, and Price was compelled to take a rushed retreat down the Missouri state line all the way to Arkansas.42

On the west side of the crossing, today the vacated line of the Lexington Road is marked by the east-west tree line observable for a half mile. From the west end of the tree line for almost six miles east to Buckner the original Lexington Road lies under the pavement of Highway 24.

In Buckner, on the southeast corner of the intersection of Highway 24 and Sibley Street is the second DAR marker designating the Lexington Road as the Santa Fe Trail. This marker is unique among the many DAR markers on the Santa Fe Trail, since it is very large, and consists of three upright stone slabs.

The left slab reads:
Santa Fe
1822 – 1872
Government Reservation
1808

The right slab reads:
Cross State Highway
Buckner 1876
Jackson Co. Mo.

The middle slab reads:
Marked By The Daughters Of The American Revolution
Of Fort Osage Township 1913

Note that this marker dates the trail era from 1822, not 1821 as the Salem Church marker correctly does. The reason is tied to the words “Cross State Highway” chiseled into the right slab, as well as the fact that this marker was placed in 1913, four years after the 1909 placement of the Salem and Levasy markers. By 1913 Henry Ford’s Model T was bringing affordable automobile ownership to many Americans, and with it came a campaign across the country for good roads. Many towns and counties, especially in the Midwest, campaigned ambitiously to be designated in some official or unofficial way as having one of those special “good roads.”

Jackson County, Missouri, was no ex-
conception, and various social groups, historical groups including the DAR, and local politicians promoted the Lexington Road as part of the great “Cross State Highway,” emphasizing its historical value as the Santa Fe Trail and its pragmatic value as the quickest and straightest way to get across the county. Because the push was on to demonstrate that the Lexington Road was good for all wheeled travel, they dated this marker from the year that William Becknell took the first three wagons to Santa Fe, 1822. Of course, the Lexington Road did not exist until about 10 years after Becknell’s 1822 trip, but they would not have known that in 1913.

Just east of Buckner, the original paved Lexington Road runs north of Highway 24 for about two and one-third miles, all the way to the next and final Lexington Road DAR marker, in Levasy. Placed there in 1909, this Santa Fe Trail marker is quite obscure, in fact so much so that it was missed by the indefatigable Margaret Long, who in her classic and scarce 1950s book cataloged DAR markers from Franklin to Santa Fe. However, this DAR marker bookends perfectly the east end of the Lexington Road. From the Levasy marker east the now-paved Lexington Road continues for one mile. Then it courses southeast for about one-third mile, vacated under a dirt and grass levee that covered the old road in 1994, right down to the original crossing of Fire Prairie Creek and the Lafayette County line just beyond.

To their credit, and to the everlasting gratitude of anyone who ever set out to find the Santa Fe Trail on the ground, the Daughters of the American Revolution, in almost every instance, placed their Santa Fe Trail markers where they believed the old trail actually was. Certainly they called upon various local people with first-hand knowledge to help establish those locations, and in the earliest years of the twentieth century many people with such knowledge of the Santa Fe Trail were still alive. While probably no one at that time could speak from first-hand experience of Becknell’s 1821 journey, there were those who had first-hand knowledge of the Lexington Road, which functioned as a Santa Fe Trail route into Independence up to the eve of the Civil War. This was the Santa Fe Trail they remembered, and why the Lexington Road is marked as such today.

These were the original and earliest routes of the Santa Fe Trail in Lafayette County and Jackson County, Missouri, and certainly in the case of the Osage Trace aka the Original Santa Fe Trail of 1821, the oldest route of the Santa Fe Trail anywhere along its 750-plus miles and in its 197-year history.

End Notes

1. Indian tribes of the midwest tended to travel single file, either on foot or on horses. Along with the empirical evidence provided by the contemporary (1818) measurement by federal surveyors of the Osage Trace as about two and a half feet wide, there is also the observation by Henry Schoolcraft of an Osage trail in the south part of Missouri in 1818 that he described as a “horsepath beaten by the Osages.” In 1724, French officer Bourgmont led a large group of Kanza Indians west from their village on the Missouri River in search of the Paducah Indians in central Kansas. Bourgmont’s engineer “…posted himself on the trail, where all had to pass…” and counted as they crossed nearly single file in front of him “…300 warriors with two great chiefs of their tribe and 14 war chiefs, and about 300 women and 500 children, and at least 300 dogs that dragged part of their luggage.”

2. For accurate modern maps of the Osage Trace, see the Hobart Stocking collection of Santa Fe Trail maps in the National Archives, ID 49065732. See also Hobart E. Stocking The Road to Santa Fe (New York: Hastings House Publishers, 1971), 8–9, 18–19.


6. The Petit Osage Plain, so named for the Little Osage tribe whose village was near modern-day Malta Bend. The Petit Osage Plain covered part of western Saline County, Missouri, and part of eastern Lafayette County, Missouri.

7. This is Grand Pass.

8. The Salt Fork branch.


12. The Hicklins’ beautiful 1838 two-story home remains today along Highway 24 east of Lexington. The Hicklins brought their Kentucky heritage with them to Missouri, and today the property is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The grounds include not only the antebellum home but also a six-unit slave quarter, a two-unit slave house, and a brick cellar house. It was not unusual to have slaves in this area at the time. In 1860 Lafayette County had the largest slave population in the state, 6,724.


15. Wilcox, 57.


17. After 1822 there were two roads south of Lexington that met up with the Osage Trace. One ran pretty much straight south from Lexington, meeting the Osage Trace five miles south. The other road from Lexington followed the Missouri River bank southwest to the Osage Trace seven miles southwest of Lexington, a point located today about one mile south of modern Wellington, at the intersection of Highway 131 and Highway 24. That this river road became the favored road out of Lexington is borne out by the deep cut banks of this road west for seven miles from the intersection south of
Wagon Tracks, August 2018

Wellington, while there is no physical trace of the road that would have led west from the other Lexington road.


19. We can only speculate why Sibley let the Walkers settle within eyesight of the fort in 1819. He certainly never knowingly let anyone else settle in the Six Mile reservation that was reserved for the use of the fort and future settlement. Perhaps he liked their brother-in-law Abraham McClenn, who was a little bit more urbane than rough-and-ready Joel and Joseph Walker. Perhaps he just wanted the company of another family nearby, especially in the midst of all the Osage. Soon after 1820 the unknown Walkers would write their legacy on the Santa Fe Trail and the American frontier, and Joseph R. Walker in particular would become perhaps the greatest of all mountain men.

20. In the mid-1830s Samuel Owens and John Aull had a grist mill erected at the site of the Santa Fe Trail crossing of the Little Blue River. The hard-bottom attribute that made this site a favored river crossing also was a good setting for a mill. Soon the Blue Mill was grinding corn for local farmers and selling wooden barrels made at the site. The Blue Mill was shut down during the Civil War, and then led an on-again-off-again existence until the tall wooden structure was torn down in the 1920s.

21. Gregg, _The Road to Santa Fe_, 55

22. Sibley’s daily journal of 1825 and 1827 in Gregg, _The Road to Santa Fe_; see also Sibley’s unpublished _Field Notes of the 1827 Re-Survey of the Santa Fe Trail_, Missouri Historical Society, St. Louis; also Joseph Brown’s 1825 manuscript map of the Original Santa Fe Trail in Jackson County, Missouri, and Johnson County, Kansas.

23. George Sibley to Owen Simpson, May 1, 1825, in Gregg, _The Road to Santa Fe_, 214–215.

24. 1825 Diary of Joseph Davis, in Gregg, 163–165, 167; 1825 Diary of Benjamin Reeves, 170, 173.

25. Fort Osage was established in 1808 as the farthest western trading “factory” in the young nation’s system of factory forts. The United States implemented the factory system in 1796. These factory forts set up trading agreements with local Indian tribes, usually for furs and hides that the fort would agree to purchase. In addition the fort functioned as a security post for the federal government. There was a small military contingent assigned to Fort Osage for most of its existence. Many of the factory forts created small sub-factories to increase their reach and influence on the Indian tribes. Harmony Mission was created just for that reason. The factory fort was led by a “factor.” George Sibley was the factor of Fort Osage for all fourteen years of the fort’s time as a factory fort.

26. The Blue Spring was located in the modern city of Blue Springs, Missouri, in or near the present Old Mill Park, just off Woods Chapel Road.

27. Sibley, _Field Notes of the 1827 Re-Survey of the Santa Fe Trail_.


30. _Missouri Intelligencer_, June 5, 1824.


33. Sibley, _Field Notes of the 1827 Re-Survey of the Santa Fe Trail_.

34. Traders continued to use the Blue Spring route after 1825. In 1827 Ezekial Williams led a group of 100 men and fifty-plus wagons on the route. May of 1828 Alphonso Wetmore led a group that met at the Blue Spring, the rendezvous of the Mexican traders. June of 1829 the _Missouri Intelligencer_ reported on a group of traders; _The subscribers will leave the Blue Springs for Santa Fe…… on the 25th of August next_. For more on the evolution of the Blue Spring route, 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, No. 4, August 1997, 8–15

35. _Road Orders of the Jackson County court_, 1827.

36. _Road Orders of the Jackson County court_, 1827.

37. The United States abolished the factory trading system in 1822. George Sibley carried on trading at Fort Osage as a private enterprise until 1825, when the Osage treaty that year opened up Jackson County to settlement. From 1825 until 1827 Sibley undertook his survey of the Santa Fe Trail for the federal government, starting and finishing at Fort Osage. Soon after, Sibley sold his interest in Fort Osage and retired to St. Charles, Missouri. The river landing at the fort received some use by trail travelers after 1827, culminating in the expedition of Benjamin Bonneville and Joseph R. Walker in May 1832 who led 110 men and 20 wagons west from Fort Osage on the Santa Fe Trail through modern Jackson County and Johnson County, Kansas, before turning northwest to follow the Oregon Trail to the Rocky Mountains.

38. _Road Orders of the Jackson County court_, 1832

39. _Road Orders of the Jackson County court_, 1833.

40. The modern highway corridor of Highway 24 lays virtually atribute the route of the Lexington Road, a tribute to the reconning of the pioneer seters of Jackson County that found the best and straightest way to traverse the county east or west.

41. Like the Walkers, the fame of the Gregg family was in the future when they first settled Jackson County in 1825. Josiah Gregg was just 19 when they first came. He went on to become a Santa Fe trader and write the classic book of trail literature, _Commerse of the Prairies_.

42. For more on the Battle of the Little Blue see Howard N. Monett, _Action Before Westport 1864_, (Kansas City, Westport Historical Society, 1964). 50–68.

43. Vacating a road that has been designated as a road by a city, county, or state entity is a process that indicates in the official records of that entity that the road is no longer a road for use by travelers, and that the land upon which the road lies reverts (in most cases, to a private landowner). Vacating is often used when the old vacated road is being replaced by another newer road.

44. Margaret Long, _The Santa Fe Trail_, (Denver, W.H. Kistler Stationery, 1954.)
Legislation Proposes Feasibility Study for Pike National Historic Trail

Harv Hisgen, President of the Pike National Historic Trail Association, notified SFTA that Colorado U.S. Senators Michael Bennet (D) and Cory Gardner (R) introduced legislation that could lead to the designation of explorer Zebulon Pike’s route through the American Southwest as a National Historic Trail. The Pike National Historic Trail Study Act would direct the National Park Service to conduct a feasibility study on designating the trail. You can read the bill at: www.congress.gov/bill/115th-congress/senate-bill/2876/text?r=1. Please note: This legislation is to compel a feasibility study, if passed. This is just the first step (and several years) in a very long road to designation as a National Historic Trail.

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.

Missouri River Outfitters
Independence, MO
President Larry Short

MRO celebrated National Trails Day on June 2 with an event at the Lone Elm Campground Rendezvous in Olathe, Kansas. For a second year, the area trails groups consisting of MRO, the Trails Head Chapter of OCTA, and the Kansas City Area Historic Trails Association joined together for the event. The event began at 10 a.m. with a presentation to a local American Heritage Girls Troop 2014, who had just completed a clean-up of the park that morning as a troop project.

The morning session was led by Jean Coupal-Smith, the President of the Trails Head Chapter, Gary Hicks, President of KCAHTA, and Larry Short, President of MRO and VP of SFTA. This year’s event was a celebration of the 175th Anniversary of the Oregon Trail and the 50th Anniversary of the signing of the National Trails System Act in 1968 by President Lyndon B. Johnson.

Kevin Corbett, retired Director of Olathe Parks and Recreation, made a presentation on the development of the Lone Elm Park as both a historic site on the National Trails and as a prestigious area sports venue park for Johnson County, Kansas. Travis Boley, Manager of OCTA, provided an update on trail-related activities and future trail events. Following a great lunch from Johnny’s BBQ, the program turned to a presentation by Tim Talbott of the Mahaffie Stagecoach Stop and Farm. Tim gave a detailed presentation on the use of oxen on the trails and the equipment used. The day’s activities concluded with Kevin Corbett providing a walking tour of the historic site.

Plans are already underway for our next National Trails Day celebration on June 1, 2019, with a bus tour to and a day in Arrow Rock, Missouri.

MRO will hold a joint meeting with the Friends of the National Frontier Trails Museum on August 25, 2018. The featured speaker will be our own Dr. Leo Oliva, who will speak about “Women Writers on the Santa Fe Trail.” The event is open, free to the public, and will be held at the National Frontier Trails Museum, 318 W. Pacific, Independence, Missouri, starting at 1:00 p.m.

Douglas County
Baldwin City, KS
President Roger Boyd

Fall Picnic, Sunday, September 16. Social starts at 5:00 p.m. at Black Jack Cabin, three miles east of Baldwin on US 56. Covered dish picnic begins at 5:30 p.m. Meats and drinks are provided by Santa Fe Trail Historical Society; everyone else brings sides, salads, and desserts. There will be a short update on current activities by Vice President Linda Ballinger. The program by guest speaker Dr. David Katzman, Emeritus Professor of Jewish Studies at the University of Kansas, is entitled “Jewish Travelers on the Santa Fe Trail.” Come join the fun and catch up with friends and neighbors about their summer activities. Open to the public. Contact Linda Ballinger for additional information at 913-980-3831.

Heart of the Flint Hills
Council Grove, KS
President Sharon Haun

Work continues to develop the Santa Fe Trail Rock Creek Crossing, making it accessible to the public. It is a very important addition to the SFT sites in the Heart of the Flint Hills.

The installation of the trail-marking signs in our chapter area gets closer to reality with the agreement of each of the counties to install the marking signs.

September 14 and 15 will be the next performances of Voices
Chapter Reports

of the Wind People in Council Grove. This historical pageant tells the story of the Kaw Indian Tribe, the Santa Fe Trail, and Council Grove. The Friday and Saturday performances are in the old riverbed, beside the Neosho River, and a stone's throw from the Santa Fe Trail crossing.

Cottonwood Crossing
McPherson, KS
President Steve Schmidt

Cottonwood Crossing Chapter's speaker at its June 21 meeting was Ellen Jones, Ranger at Ft. Larned NHS. Her topic was “Spanish - Mexican Influence on the Santa Fe Trail.” The chapter's speaker for its August 16th meeting is Ken Spurgeon, whose topic will be “The Story of the Osage, and the Osage and Santa Fe Trails.” Ken has a Master's Degree in History from Wichita State University and currently teaches at Friends University in Wichita, Kansas.

Quivira
McPherson, KS
President Linda Colle

The Quivira Chapter held its annual joint meeting with the Barton County Historical Society in Great Bend on July 23. Prior to the program, a short meeting was held to discuss potential activities for the 200th anniversary of the Santa Fe Trail, which is coming up in 2021.

Rex Buchanan presented the program “Water in Kansas: Past & Present.” This presentation highlighted how water issues today define much about Kansans in the future, just as it always has. Rex is the interim director of the Kansas Geological Survey and the author of books about Kansas geology and water. The program was made possible by Humanities Kansas.

The sign design for the Little Arkansas sign project has been drafted. The National Park Service is working with the consultant to complete the design. Completion of the design phase is anticipated by August 31.

The chapter is planning a tour of the Little Arkansas area on September 22, a joint effort with the Inman Historical Association in conjunction with the Inman, Kansas, Santa Fe Days. Since this is a celebration of Santa Fe Days, the organizers asked for a Santa Fe Trail tour. We thought it was important that we participate in this tour, although it does compete with the Rendezvous activities in Larned that same weekend. A fall meeting is planned for the chapter but the details are still in development.

In April, chapter members participated in Council Grove’s 50th anniversary celebration of the signing of the National Trails Act. The celebration was held in conjunction with the SFTA spring board meeting. Unfortunately, the day with all the activities, April 21, was pretty much a rainout. Chapter members participating were Carolyn Kern, Marlene Carson, Lorna Nelson, Britt and Linda Colle, Joanne and Greg Vancoeven, and Larry Short.

Wet/Dry Routes
Great Bend, KS
President George Elmore

The Wet/Dry Chapter is extremely fortunate to have such hard
working members like Doug Springer who took charge and has gotten in place our new sign on the Larned State Complex grounds, the “Boyd’s Ranch” sign. The sign is located on the State side close to the Pawnee Fork Crossing; it looks fantastic. We thank everyone who has helped in some way, from design to installation. Stop and look at the new chapter sign when you’re in Larned.

The chapter has held regular meetings with an average of around 50 people attending regularly. Dr. Leo Oliva is the chapter program chairman, consciously coming up with interesting, informative, and enjoyable meetings.

We do not want to lose sight of the upcoming Santa Fe Trail Rendezvous with a fantastic slate of speakers. We extend a welcome to all the members of Santa Fe Trail Association Chapters to attend this wonderful meeting.

Dodge City/Fort Dodge/Cimarron

Dodge City, KS
President Bill Bunyan

Our spring meeting was held at Kinsley with the Wet-Dry chapter. Fort Larned Chief Ranger George Elmore talked about Medal of Honor recipient Leander Herron, who was a courier between Fort Dodge and Fort Larned and received the Medal of Honor for his activities in an Indian battle on Big Coon Creek. A delicious meal was served by a local Kinsley group that raises money for Kinsley activities. Each chapter held a business meeting.

The chapter met at Fort Dodge on Sunday, July 22, in a joint meeting with the Wet-Dry chapter from Larned. Dr. Leo Oliva talked about the Fort and our new story boards, which we dedicated at the meeting.

We are very sad to report that loyal chapter member Bill Miller died. He was also a member of the Western Cattle Trail chapter. Bill loved our western history. He was one of the Jaycees who helped start Boot Hill Museum. Bill served in the Army in WW II and was part of the D-Day invasion of France. He once presented a program to our chapter about his experiences.

We continue to get out the Santa Fe Trail place mats to the Dodge House and the Cowtown restaurants and hopefully in the future to the Santa Fe Grill in Cimarron. That restaurant has been completely remodeled and has good food.

Vice President Mike Strodtman has sprayed for weeds around many of our story boards and markers and we continue to check the geocache boxes.

Our fall meeting will be held in November. We will look back at the last two years’ accomplishments and also ahead to the future. If you have ideas about projects or speakers, this will be the time to talk about them. Vice President Strodtman and I have a couple of ideas.

Wagon Bed Spring

Lakin, KS
President Linda Peters

Some of the chapter members have been working on a summer event for the Wagon Bed Spring site. Join us on August 25 as we step back in time to rediscover Wagon Bed Spring on the Santa Fe Trail. There will be wagon rides, walking tours, historical displays, and a chuck wagon-style dinner. Tours, wagon rides, and displays start at 2 p.m. Dinner is served at 6 p.m. The dinner and wagon ride price is $10 for adults and $5 for children 12 and under. RSVP by August 1 to 620-356-4700 to be included in the dinner and ride. Bring your lawn chairs, bug spray, sunscreen, and water or sports drink to stay hydrated while you explore. Closed-toed shoes are recommended due to uneven terrain, bushy weed/cactus growth, and the possibility of bugs and snakes.

Directions: From Ulysses, Kansas—Go south on KS Hwy 25 for 8 miles, then straight south 3.5 miles on Wagon Bed Springs Road. Follow the signs. From Hugoton—Go north on KS Hwy 25 for 13 miles to the Grant/Stevens County line. Then go north on Wagon Bed Springs Road 1.5 miles. Follow the signs. In case of inclement weather, the event will be moved to the Historic Adobe Museum in Ulysses at 300 East Oklahoma Avenue/ KS Hwy 160.

Cimarron Cutoff

Elkhart, KS
President Jay Williams

The spring chapter meeting was held in Elkhart, Kansas. Larry Justice, SFTA President, attended. We discussed the 50th celebration to be held in Elkhart, Kansas, Boise City, Oklahoma, and Clayton, New Mexico. Great tours and events have been planned. Please plan to attend. Plaques from the National Park Service were presented to Robert and Sonia Davis for their preservation of the ruts on their property, to the Cimarron Heritage Center in Boise City, Oklahoma, and to the Morton County Historical Society Museum in Elkhart, Kansas. Jay and Carrie Williams attended Fort Union Days in honor of Faye Gaines, where they enjoyed all of the events and programs.
Bent’s Fort
Lamar, CO
President Kevin Lindahl

Have you ever wondered how you can increase your chapter membership? Well, all you need do is check out what the Bent’s Fort Chapter does. It is our chapter’s philosophy that membership is encouraged and increased if you offer outstanding treks and programs. We plan a monthly activity that is relevant, informative, and enjoyable to all who attend.

Chapter members have enjoyed activities over the last few months. In April, chapter members took on the daunting task to clean the homes and grounds of Boggsville, helping to get the site ready for the spring and summer visitors. In May, chapter members had the distinct opportunity to take part in a phenomenal event at the Hasser/Emick Ranch on the Granada Fort Union Military Freight Road. Several sites along the trail on the ranch were dedicated.

In June, chapter members enjoyed a weekend exploring the panhandle of Texas. Members toured the Goodnight Historical Center and Museum in Goodnight, Texas, toured Palo Duro Canyon including getting to see the Texas Play, and toured the Plains-Panhandle Museum in Canyon, Texas. In addition, members had the opportunity to visit the Adobe Walls Battle Sites, hearing informative talks by experts Alvin Lynn, Michael Grauer, and John Carson. This was truly a weekend to remain in our memories forever. As the year “marches on,” the Bent’s Fort Chapter has some great activities planned—come join us along the way if you are in Colorado.

Corazon de los Caminos
Cimarron, NM
President Doyle Daves

On June 16 at Fort Union National Monument, approximately fifty people gathered to honor Faye Gaines as “Defender of the Santa Fe Trail.” A unique gift, designed and built by Ernie Quintana, featuring Santa Fe Trail artifacts found on the Quintana Ranch, was presented to Faye in honor of the occasion. Everyone enjoyed the event and the opportunity to express appreciation to Faye for her dedicated service in behalf of the Trail.

On July 21, the chapter gathered at Watrous where the Mountain Branch and Cimarron Branch of the Trail unite for the last trek into Santa Fe. The program was a talk about the three trading posts there that served the Trail — those of James Bonney, Alexander Barclay (Barclay’s Fort), and Samuel Watrous — and visits to some interesting Trail sites of the area.

Our fall schedule will have us in Trinidad August 25 for a program with the Bent’s Fort Chapter. September is reserved for the Rendezvous at Larned, and we will be at Fort Union National Monument for a program in October.

End of the Trail
Santa Fe, NM
President Joy Poole

Projects: Plateau Funds for New Mexico – Tiptonville Project. The Tiptonville collaborative project between End of the Trail Chapter and Corazon de los Caminos Chapter is progressing. Members are finalizing the interpretive text and illustrations for a wayside exhibition and the location for the panel.

Field Trip – August 18 – A morning van tour of Forked Lightning Ranch and Pecos National Historic Park. Requires an RSVP to Joy Poole by August 1. amusejoy@gmail.com or 505-660-1845. Carpool departs Zia Road and St. Francis – Albertson’s parking lot west side at 9 a.m.


Insidiously, with migration came the clash of cultures. Racism became as infectious as small pox. Bloodshed and retaliation became a way of life. Thousands died. As William’s five half-Cheyenne children grew to maturity, they were confronted with a very particular, personified struggle of the Plains Indians under siege. His ultimate contribution was to preserve the Indians’ story. At the Confluence of Two Cultures is a story of two generations of an accomplished pioneer family who left their indelible mark upon the shaping of the West.

The lives of the William Bents and their biracial son George tell much of the story of western development in the 19th century and the effect of white settlement on the indigenous people who were occupying the land. The story of land grabs by stronger populations over weaker groups is a constant throughout history.

Saturday - November 17, 1:30 – 3:30. “Women Writers on the Santa Fe Trail” is offered by the End of the Trail Chapter of the Santa Fe Trail Association (SFTA) through the SFTA Speaker’s Bureau program. Presenter: Leo Oliva, Ph.D.

Some of the first women to travel across present-day Kansas were travelers on the Santa Fe Trail. The presentation will look at the adventures and reflections of four women who wrote their own stories. One woman traveled with her husband’s wagon train in 1846, while another traveled back and forth five times between the ages of 7 and 17. The most famous woman to be discussed, however, was Julia Archibald Holmes who later became the first women to climb Pike’s Peak in Colorado.

Leo Oliva is a historian with a research focus on 19th-century Kansas. He is the author of Soldiers on the Santa Fe Trail, six books for the Kansas Fort Series, and was a founding member of the Santa Fe Trail Association and Fort Larned Old Guard.
EVENTS

August 1: Trails 50 Coalition Photo Contest deadline
August 11: Cleveland, NM. Roller Mill Museum benefit dance
August 12: Council Grove, KS. Kaw Mission ice cream social
August 16: McPherson, KS. Cottonwood Crossing Chapter, “The Story of the Osage”
August 18: Pecos National Historic Park, NM. End of the Trail tour
August 25: Ulysses, KS. Wagon Bed Spring Chapter event
August 25: Trinidad, CO. Bent’s Fort and Corazon Chapter program
September 1: Student photo contest deadline
September 9: Baldwin City, KS. Douglas County Chapter fall picnic
September 14-15: Council Grove, KS. Kaw Mission Mountain Man Rendezvous, Voice of the Wind People
September 15: La Junta, CO. Bent’s Old Fort National Historic Site, Hispanic Heritage Day
September 15: Santa Fe, NM. End of the Trail Chapter, “Racism Moves West across the Trails”
September 20-22: Larned, KS. SFTA Board meeting and Rendezvous
September 22: Inman, KS. Quivira Chapter tour
October 5-7: Elkhart, KS, Boise City, OK, Clayton, NM. Cimarron Cutoff sponsors 50th Celebration
October 10: Wagon Tracks submission deadline for November issue
October 13: Kim, CO. Bent’s Fort Chapter field trip
October 20: Ft. Union, NM. Corazon Chapter tour
October 20: La Junta, CO. Bent’s Old Fort National Historic Site, Native American Heritage Day
October 21: Council Grove, KS. Kaw Mission Osage Nation, Children of the Middle Waters
November 17: Santa Fe, NM. End of the Trail Chapter, “Women Writers of the Santa Fe Trail”
March 29-30, 2019: SFTA /NPS Workshop and SFTA board meeting
September 24, 2019: St. Louis, MO. SFTA board meeting
September 24-28, 2019: St. Louis, MO. SFTA Symposium
September 24-26, 2020: Larned, KS. SFTA Rendezvous
June 12, 2021: near Council Grove, KS. Symphony in the Flint Hills on the Santa Fe Trail
September 22-25, 2021: Bent’s Old Fort, CO. SFTA Symposium

For information on additional Fort activities: See www.nps.gov/planyour-visit/event-search.htm. See also www.santafetrail.org for more details.