



OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF
THE YELLOWSTONE TRAIL ASSOCIATION

"A Good Road from Plymouth Rock to Puget Sound"



TRAILMAN OF THE YEAR

On March 18 a small but hardy group of Yellowstone Trail Association members gathered to honor the Trailman of the Year, Michael Koerner of Appleton, WI. Michael is an outstanding researcher. He has documented the location of the Yellowstone Trail in detailed and meticulous research using automobile Blue Books, aerial photographs and field work.

He has traveled hundreds of miles through several states and has come up with additional information about the route and some changes in maps previously composed by John Ridge. This is particularly useful to John who now has someone who is a tremendous help in documenting the thousands of detailed turns and twists as well as in finding a way for tourists to drive it.



Members Elsie Yohr, Ann Mathwig and Wanda Harrison enjoy cake (left); Tom Sutter, host, dressed the part (center); Alice Ridge presents Michael Koerner his award (right).

Michael has spent hours and hours in research, travel, and thought about the Yellowstone Trail. He has furthered a goal of the Association which is "historical research." The Yellowstone Trail Association presented to him the "Trailman of the Year" award for his commitment to research.

The place of the gathering was significant, too. Member Thomas Sutter, also of Appleton, is a lawyer by day but a photography buff by avocation. His unique "Picture This Gallery" features antique photos and photographic equipment. Our presentation coincided with his open house featuring a guest expert and a display of stereopticons, lantern slides and other old equipment. This display was certainly relevant to the Yellowstone Trail era.

Sutter has a room dedicated to Yellowstone National Park memorabilia. What better place to be for talk about the Yellowstone Trail!

Congratulations to Michael Koerner. **C**

MAJOR EFFORT TO MARK THE YT AND PROMOTE SEVEN SMALL COMMUNITIES

As we mentioned in our last Arrow, seven small communities strung along 40 miles of the Yellowstone Trail in central Wisconsin recently banded together for the purpose of promotion and economic development. They are Cadott, Boyd, Stanley, Thorp, Withee, Owen, and Curtiss. The group sought a community-connecting theme through which to promote themselves. These communities are not suburbs looking for a city. They each offer a buffet of little gems like city parks, beautiful centenary churches, quaint restaurants, and American history in addition to some modern industry.

The group chose the Yellowstone Trail as its unifying theme, showing the group's knowledge of the route of the Trail along present highway County X, and of its historic importance. County X runs through Chippewa and Clark counties - same name, same straight line - and it runs through all seven communities. Because Wisconsin Highway 29 runs parallel to X and is the more traveled major thruway, the group calls itself the Highway 29 Community Partnership. To this end the group is marking the Trail through two counties with 101 reflective Yellowstone Trail highway-quality signs. The

Mayor David Jankoski urges on the 4th graders (center) who painted a rock in Stanley. Collage of rocks painted April 19 in Cadott, Stanley and Boyd, Wis.



Cont'd on p. 3

MUSEUM OF NORTH IDAHO OPENS YELLOWSTONE TRAIL/HIGHWAY 10 EXHIBIT

Dorothy Dahlgren, Director, shared with us the press release and the news that the Museum of North Idaho in Coeur d'Alene, Idaho, has a special exhibit:

"The Museum's feature exhibit 'Highway 10 - Remember When' explores the routes of the main highways across North Idaho and their construction, early auto travel, service stations, hotels, restaurants and attractions along the way. Do you remember when the main highway went right through the downtown of many American cities? In North Idaho we had the Yellowstone Trail which later became Highway 10. Although travel was slower on these early highways, they were much more interesting than the Interstate is today. On the old highway motorists could easily access the many businesses and attractions along the route without having to wait for an exit. This exhibit looks at the way motorists experienced travel in North Idaho."



Part of the Museum's display showing the Yellowstone Trail History Poster. The poster is available from YT Publishers.

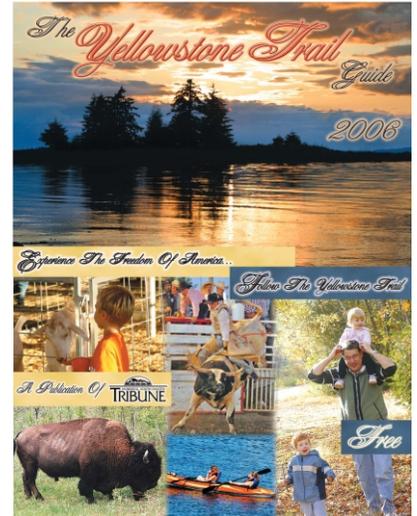
Dorothy also reported that YTA member, Thomas Flanagan, will be the featured speaker at the Museum's forthcoming annual meeting. Flanagan will present "The Yellowstone Trail/Highway 10 - Remember When," an archaeological roadside history of the Yellowstone Trail/US Highway 10. The Museum of North Idaho serves as the regional repository for historical materials relating to the history of the Coeur d'Alene Region.

YT GUIDE #1: FROM TERRY, MT TO MINNEAPOLIS: A VIRTUAL TRIP ALONG THE TRAIL

Members from Terry to Minneapolis! Keep your eyes peeled! A really great Yellowstone Trail Guide for that area will be available Memorial Day and throughout the summer, or until the 22,000 free copies are gone.

The Guide will contain detailed maps of the Trail - following its twists and turns. "Driving Notes" will help the traveler through areas too congested for small maps. There will be historical bits about the Trail as they relate to specific towns. And, of course, there will be news about town events and suggested tourist sights.

The Guide is being published by the *Mobridge (SD) Tribune*. The *Tribune* has been publishing a Highway 12 Guide for some years. The Yellowstone Trail Guide will replace that former, easily recognizable 40-page free guide to towns along that route. This Guide will follow the Trail from far eastern Montana to Minneapolis.



It will be familiar to people who read shoppers guide-type publications, but it will have a four-color cover and be on heavier paper than newsprint. We think that it will be a class act. Advertising will pay for the production.

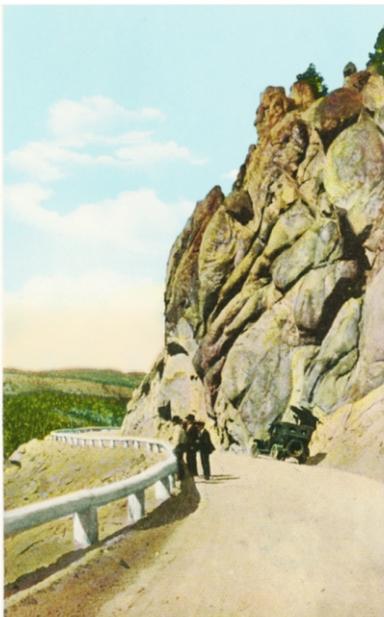
In the planning stages are similar Guides for other states along the Trail. Wisconsin is next, then Montana, then Idaho/Washington, then we go east. YOU CAN HELP BY SUGGESTING:

1. advertisers who you know or think would be interested in buying an ad to promote their business AND the YT.
2. historic museums, buildings, bridges, signs, roadside architecture of interest in your area.

Send ideas to: Yellowstone Trail Association, P.O. Box 65, Altoona, WI 54720-0065.

If you would like a copy of the first Guide and you cannot pick up a free copy from places along the area covered by the Guide, send \$5 to cover postage and handling to Yellowstone Trail Publishers (same address: P.O. Box 65, Altoona, WI 54720-0065.) When we receive a batch of them we'll forward a copy to you immediately.

A QUICK QUIZ



Where on the YT is this pile of rocks? Hm-m-m. Go ahead, try to guess. Looks exactly the same today, except, of course the Yellowstone Trail is paved here. Give up?

Hint: The name of this section of the YT is named after a US president.

If you must, see the answer on page 6 but don't peek until you've tried to guess.

Did you get it right? You're one terrific Road Scholar. **C**

The Rainbow Arch Bridge on the YT in Ortonville, Minnesota. When built -- and today, unused and in need of preservation and use.



MAJOR EFFORT *continued from page 1*

effort to mark the Trail is being extended to the west by another major sign project in Chippewa County. (See Trail-o-grams.)

Under the leadership of the Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Authority (WHEDA), the group produced 5000 snappy brochures and is hosting two culminating events:

1) April 19 there was a "Trail Day" almost equivalent to the "Trail Days" of old when whole towns went out to work on the road. In this case, 4th graders and residents came out to mark the Trail with yellow painted rocks, to put up the last of the 101 signs, and to generally spruce up County X, the Yellowstone Trail, in their area.

2) May 5 the communities will feature special events starting at the eastern village and moving sequentially through westward towns, ending with a picnic at the western most town. Ceremonies to unveil the recently installed Yellowstone Trail highway signs, and to dedicate individual town historic plaques will occur. The state's Lieutenant Governor and several state representatives are expected to attend.

The area cable television company, Charter Cable, agreed to run a 30 second ad 300 times as a public service promoting the events and the communities, or as they said, "the history of the Yellowstone Trail in 9 seconds." A local television station will conduct interviews with Yellowstone Trail Association member towns about the events.

Financially speaking, this group ran on empty. There was no assured source of revenue to buy highway signs or produce the brochure. Individual towns were represented by their government officials, so their time and mileage for the monthly planning meetings were absorbed in their budgets, but most things were accomplished by creative begging. A historical society, an energy company, a phone company, WHEDA, and a community business association, in addition to Charter Cable, saw the advantage of supporting this economic development effort.

This is proof that small towns can do much to promote themselves and the Yellowstone Trail – with a just a little ingenuity! **C**

BRIDGE DISCOVERY

Two members of the YT Association, both Trailmen, met in Chaska, Minnesota, with the Association president, John Ridge, early in March, 2006, to thrash out several most interesting ideas. The first member was Lance Sorenson of Hector, Minnesota, one of the first members of the Association. Lance has determinedly researched the history of the Trail in central Minnesota and found a good quantity of valuable history and many great historic pictures. He is also the member who painted and placed that great yellow rock with the Trail logo seen in a past Arrow. The second member, Bernard "Butch" Schulte, is new to the Association and has developed a significant interest in the old named highways, primarily the YT. While residing a bit off the Trail in Litchfield, Minnesota, he has been spreading the word about the Trail and his occupation brings him into contact with quite a number of people who know about it.

The central topic of the meeting was the fantastic "find" those two members made while inspecting the Trail across the state. Just east of the South Dakota border, at Ortonville, with the assistance of a Big Stone County Historical Museum volunteer, they found a "Marsh Rainbow" bridge on the original route of the Trail that had been cut off by construction of US 12. It has been disused for several decades and without maintenance, but eminently eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. How can we motivate its preservation and use as a sight to see along the Trail?

A NOTE ESPECIALLY FOR TOURISM-RELATED GROUPS AND DMO'S

Convention and Visitors Bureaus, Chambers of Commerce, Economic Development agencies, tour companies, and other DMOs (Destination Marketing Organizations) are in a unique position to adopt the Yellowstone Trail as part of a promotion campaign.

Think about the effectiveness of attracting Heritage Tourists, the greatest/fastest growing segment of tourism. As part of a promotion campaign in which dozens of DMOs are each promoting One Historic Route across the country through your area, you will gain strength. That's right! By joining together in a promotion campaign tying your area's sights and sites to the Yellowstone Trail, you would not be fighting for the tourist, but receiving tourists and handing them along One Historic Route. Join with us to take part in promoting travel on the Trail. Promote your historic sites and travelers' services to the cross-country traveler seeking local history as well as to area residents re-discovering this local, and national, treasure: The Yellowstone Trail, a road with a name. See p.1 in this *Arrow* for the story of seven small communities who joined together to promote their towns along the Trail. Local government joined with two economic and development groups and private business to achieve a thematic link. Page 2 speaks of the story of the forthcoming YT Guide which covers some 700 miles of the Trail, featuring ads, history, maps and Trail town sites/sights.

Join the YTA to support your area historic and service resources or to discover the possibility of recreating a local Trail Day; capitalize on antique auto Sociability Runs; share brochures and guides to historic buildings, bridges, and old roadways, antique shops, B & Bs, appropriate restaurants and businesses.

Want more ideas? Add a Yellowstone Trail sign to your town's welcome signs at city limits; paint rocks yellow with a black arrow and place them along the Trail in your area; add "on the Yellowstone Trail" to your heritage signs; mark the route through your community with 18x24 replicas of the original metal signs. Tour agencies can set up tours (bus or otherwise) along the Trail as has already been done. Most states have "tourist maps" featuring sites for vacationers; contact your state map-makers to add the Trail to those tourist maps or the official state map. The Yellowstone Trail Association can help you with some of these ideas.

Put people on to this very early auto route and off the Interstates to relive the original travel experience and to enjoy your town's heritage. The Yellowstone Trail Association can help members accomplish this. **C**

→ We talked about the need to distribute a list of rules/guidelines for placing Trail markers, where to put them, how to direct the arrow, and what to do on non-through roads. The list will be ready "soon." Also, Lance and Butch are experimenting with the new 18" metal stencil of the Trail logo they picked up at the meeting.

The possibility of collecting Post Marks from small towns along the Trail which will probably lose their Post Office was explored. An effort will be made to mail YTA envelopes from the towns to collect the Post Marks. Also, a reproduction of a 1920's YTA postcard will be reproduced to use for that purpose. The post card will be available "shortly" from Yellowstone Trail Publishers for wide use by travelers along the Trail.

We are looking for volunteers and ideas about that neat bridge in Ortonville. It is a great opportunity! Interested? **C**

HISTORY CORNER

A CAMPING WE WILL GO

Spring is here. Are you getting antsy to go camping? Consider what camping life was like along the Yellowstone Trail 80 or 90 years ago.

Frank Wentworth camped solo on and off the Yellowstone Trail from 1924 to 1926. He wrote with humor and stoicism about his many trials during that two-year odyssey in his entertaining book, *On the Road With Lizzie*. In his dicey second hand Ford he carried a "sheet metal stove" that he set up almost every night. He threaded its long chimney pipe up through a hole in his 8x10 tent, at times starting the thing on fire. Almost every page speaks of flat tires, impossible roads, questionable traveling companions, auto breakdowns and heavy storms.



Wentworth & Lizzie

Other Yellowstone Trail campers' diaries report horror stories of rattlesnakes, alkaline water, gasoline shortages, impossibly narrow and steep roads in the northern Rockies and Cascades and early snow storms. Camping seemed a sport for the brave who never tired of magnifying their tales around the campfires and of publishing them in popular magazines.

But things were changing in America during the second decade of

It started out with people just pulling over and sleeping in farmers' fields. As farmers saw the trash they left, they demanded that somebody do something about these "gypsies." *Western Tourism, Good Roads, the American Motorist* and other popular magazines of the time heartily encouraged organized camps. Communities at first just set aside a grassy place, but amenities were not far behind.



The benefit of these "tin can tourists" and "gypsies" to communities could not be denied. Countless local newspapers along the Trail told of the planning and maintenance of their free community camps. Commercial Clubs, Chambers of Commerce and Development Leagues were usually in charge, lead by the local Yellowstone Trail "Trailman." Weekly reports of numbers of campers frequently made small town headlines

In the summer of 1921 the eleven information bureaus on the Yellowstone Trail clocked 41,624 inquiries. Of these, they noted "an unusually large number of Ford cars carrying people of limited means, practically all of those camping." The National Parks Service made a better estimate stating that "of the nearly 100,000 cars entering national parks in 1919, 60% were camping."



Note wooden tent floor!

Communities welcomed the Yellowstone Trail not only because



COTTAGE, COOK HOUSE & GARAGE

GAUKEL BROTHERS
State Line Garage & Tourists' Camp
EAST CONNEAUT, OHIO

COOK HOUSE
FREE DAWNING
REST ROOMS
TENTS, COIS
GROCERIES SUPPLIES
REFRESHMENTS
SHOWERS
MICHELIN TIRES

SINCLAIR GASOLINE OILS
STORAGE
ACCESSORIES
LOTS OF AIR
SANITARY CONVENIENCES
EVERYTHING FOR SELF AND GAR
GARAGE SERVICE

120 miles West of Buffalo
Chicago - Buffalo or Yellowstone Trail
70 miles East of Cleveland
PHONE 1378 MAIN.



CAMP GROUND

Gaukel Brothers, State Line Garage & Tourists' Camp, East Conneaut, Ohio

the 20th century that put a better light on camping

That great equalizer, the automobile, opened travel opportunity beyond the railroad's reach and allowed families to circumvent the small town hotels. The auto allowed families of modest means to travel by camping. Sinclair Lewis's book, *Free Air*, was based on his own camping trip along the Yellowstone Trail from Minnesota to Seattle. The point of his story about the penniless camper repeatedly rescuing two wealthy campers was that merit should be based upon the individual's abilities, not his social class, a feeling that automobiles and, by extension, camping made clear.

And then there were campgrounds.



Transition from camp to cabins. Missoula Tourist Park.

of its promise of a good road for regional use, but because of the economic bounty it would bring from tourism. After all, campers had to eat and gas up. By 1922, there were 126 free campgrounds



Whitehall, Montana, camp on the left.

Cont'd on page 5

in Trail towns.

Problems in Eden

Unsanitary conditions emerged in the mid-20's. In Trail states Indiana and Minnesota, health departments noted serious problems with drinking water and waste disposal that affected at least 27% of camps. Chief dangers were typhoid, diarrhea and dysentery.



Community Camp Kitchen

In part to raise money for better maintenance of camps and in part to discourage people from using free camps as permanent addresses, Hal Cooley, General Manager of the Yellowstone Trail Association, advised member towns to start charging a small fee. Policing the camp grounds regularly also had become an



Deer Lodge, Montana, Tourist Camp

unfortunate necessity.

Central Park, Montana, learned to police its camp ground too late. In the autumn of 1920, two couples and three small children camped there for over a month, living on fish and the meat of a trap line. One of the couples was killed and buried right in the camp. For three years no one knew of these "auto-tramp" deaths. Then the wife in the surviving couple named her husband as the killer. He was hanged for the deed. She supposedly confessed her guilt on her death bed.

And the Future?

Minnesota horticulturalist Clarence Wedge camped frequently along the Yellowstone Trail in the Midwest and in 1916 predicted that, "One of the charms about the great country traversed by the Yellowstone Trail is its newness and freshness - broad stretches without a sign of human habitation. But this is fast passing away . . . homes are being mapped out by the thousand. The time is close at hand when the main highways will be built up . . . The way will be safer and speedier, but will lack some of the spice of adventure and it will be harder to realize the simple life about the camp fire."

Wedge was right in fact but not in spirit. The community campgrounds have largely disappeared. Many of the roadways used by the old Yellowstone Trail are "safer and speedier" although they are seldom freeways. Even the nature of camping has changed today. Often one must call ahead for a space; our 40 foot traveling homes with private bathrooms thwart spontaneous conversations with fellow travelers. Conversations about miserable road conditions and frequent auto breakdowns seldom happen in campground kitchens or outhouse lines today.

But camping along the Yellowstone Trail today can offer a unique experience. Except for a few miles, the trail is not on an Interstate. This means that the original trail campgrounds still in existence, bearing 21st century garb and name, are usually on quiet back roads. But they are still there if you look. In Denny Creek Campground near North Bend, Washington, or Melgaard Park right in Aberdeen, South Dakota, and others, people do still gather around campfires and swap roadway tales in the nighttime quiet in the very places where Model Ts, Wintons and Maxwells once stood. Mr. Wedge sold camping on the Yellowstone Trail short; it's alive and well after 90 years. **C**

Adapted from American Road magazine by A. Ridge.

ON BECOMING THE YELLOWSTONE TRAIL

Member Suzanne Fish runs a B&B, the Addison House, on Wisconsin highway 175. But she was not happy with that address - so she changed the street name to Yellowstone Trail! She tells us how it happened.

Living on the Yellowstone Trail, by Suzanne Fish

Not everyone who currently lives on an old section of the Yellowstone Trail has the opportunity I had. Due to road construction, the road where I live was changed from a state highway to a town road. This called for a change in the name of the road. What an opportunity! Early on, I had decided I was going to get the name changed to Yellowstone Trail.

I did my preliminary work of talking to neighbors and getting them to sign a petition. Sometimes this was a bit difficult as this is a really long name for an address and I had to explain WHAT the Yellowstone Trail was....having the brochures and the fact that there are both state and national Trail organizations made it more of a reality to them - as opposed to just my own crazy idea. But I stuck to it and got their signatures.

Next came the people at the Washington County Historical Society. They already knew about the Trail, so that made it easy for me to get them to sign. Then I went to the Washington County Convention and Visitors Bureau and they, too, were happy to sign. I appealed to the Town Board at one of their meetings, and they voted in favor of the idea. Now, instead of living on the corner of State Highways 33 and 175, my house is on the Yellowstone Trail, just as it was back in the early 1900's.

Suzanne wanted to tell the story because "it's mostly to help other people think of different ways of promoting the Trail thinking of unusual ways to promote the Trail and taking advantage of every opportunity. There will be a big dedication ceremony, hopefully, I'm thinking July, as I want the yellow flowers blooming and another surprise I'm cooking up to be all ready. It will be very photogenic, I'm sure!!" Well, Suzanne, knowing your energy level, your dedication event is bound to be a success. The date will be reported in the next *Arrow*. **C**

THE YELLOWSTONE TRAIL IS 94!

It rained the night of April 23, 1912 when Joe Parmley called men of affairs from near-by counties together in Ipswich, SD. They were all Good Roads members, county board men and businessmen interested in "getting out of the mud." The immediate agenda called for action to get a decent road to Aberdeen, 26 miles away, built. But Parmley harbored a dream that eventually a transcontinental road could be built, not by individual pick and shovel, but by uniting citizens in a trail organization. In numbers there would be strength to push county boards to put their road tax dollars into one connected road. That summer the phrase "A Good Road From Plymouth Rock to Puget Sound" was born.



The formal organization with bylaws, officers and a name did not occur until October 9-10 in Lemmon, SD, but April 23 is the recognized birthday. Happy 94th Birthday, YT! **C**

- TRAILOGRAMS -

THE MONTANA HISTORY CONFERENCE.

Montana members mark your calendars! The Montana Historical Society is holding its annual meeting in Billings at the Sheraton Hotel September 28-30, 2006. And the Yellowstone Trail Association has been invited to speak in the persons of Alice and John Ridge who will present the great historic tale of the Trail on Friday September 29 at 3:00. Come support your Association! In addition, we will attempt a get-together of YT members and friends in Billings or Livingston. Give Trailman Brian Sparks, Director of the Yellowstone Gateway Museum of Park County (MT) a call at (406) 222-4184 if you are interested.

76 YT SIGNS UP. Chippewa County (Wisconsin) will be sporting, by the time you read this, 76 large Yellowstone Trail signs along the route of the YT. Purchased by the Chippewa County Historical Society, the signs will be put up by the city and county highway departments. The effort together with the seven community project (see page 1) will result in 55 miles of well marked Trail.

MULLAN CONFERENCE. Our friends in the Mullan Society have ratcheted up their annual meet to a two-day deal, May 13-14 at Helena, MT, Great Northern Hotel. You will get a ride through Mullan Pass by MT Rail Link and 11 riveting presentations about the Mullan Military Road (1859-1862). Yes, we know that was 50 years pre-YT, but the two roads are intertwined in many places. So go! Full info at:

www.co.lewis-clark.mt.us/history/historic_preservation.php.

NEWS FROM INDIANA. Still following the progress of the Marshall County Historical Society. They are the ones with a large addition being renovated, large grant received and large plans for a Crossroads Center. The Center will feature four historic roads that crossed in their town, Plymouth, Indiana: the Yellowstone Trail, Michigan Road, U.S.6 (Grand Army of the Republic highway) and Lincoln Highway. The architect has been chosen to renovate their building with the newly acquired building next door. They are still working on finding additional grant sources to supply funds for the Crossroads Exhibit.

BIG DOINGS AT MOBRIDGE, SD. Their centennial celebration happens June 30-July 5. Great stuff is planned. The usual fireworks, school reunion and cotton candy will be joined by a rodeo and stampede, quilters, and the Blue Angels! Sounds like a blast.

300 YEARS. Here's an early heads-up for your plans for summer 2007. Three towns along the Trail will be celebrating their centennials within 16 days and 65 miles of each other. Of course, plans are not fully flushed out yet, but it appears that they all will have the requisite parade, fireworks, dance and much hoopla. We shall report details in a later Arrow.

Bowman, ND will begin the celebrations on June 30 to July 4 and will feature a wagon train moving from Amidon to Bowman, a concert and a free picnic. Check their web site www.bowmandn.com. **Hettinger, ND**, July 3-8, will add school reunions, antique car show and "a lumberjack event." Check out their web site, www.Hettingerndcentennial.com. **Lemmon, SD**, July 10-15, will add a musical, a play, and a singer to their annual "Boss Cowman" event. www.lemmonsd.com. What!?! No cotton candy??

125 YEARS. Remember last year we reported on Fremont's (WI) annual summer celebration which included Yellowstone Trail signs? Well, member Elsie Mae Yohr and the

Fremont Historical Society (also a member) are at it again. They are planning their city's 125th anniversary and they report that "they intend to make the Yellowstone Trail one of the main features" this time.

150 YEARS. Member Joan Behm is a booster of the Trail which went right through her town of **Weyauwega, WI** (pronounced y-o-WE-ga). She reports that the small community of 1800 will be celebrating its sesquicentennial June 30-July 2. "Firsts" for the town include the first rye elevator, and the first regiment sent to the Civil War from WI. The elevator is the only one still standing in the US and will sport an historical mural for the sesquicentennial.

"Many events are planned for the three day sesquicentennial celebration. You are invited to join us and learn more about the history along the Yellowstone Trail in Weyauwega."

What Joan may not know is that the YTA sponsored a relay race along the Trail in June, 1915, from Chicago to Seattle. This promotional event took 97 hours, running 24 hours a day. Careful observations were made by drivers and it seems that the relay car that went through Weyauwega the night of June 15 (with only feeble headlights) was guided by "a mile of torches and red fire and bonfires with a background of men, women and children made a sight seldom seen as our swiftly-moving car went through the cheering files of people."

FIRE! Corson County court house in McIntosh, SD burned down April 10.

County records, however, had been stored in four concrete vaults and were saved. Annette Gehring and others who worked there were Friends of the Trail, occasionally sending the YTA relevant historic items in their area.



The fire started in the second floor and, because the building was wood and 96 years old, it soon became a total loss. It did not have a sprinkler system. At 96, that building saw the establishment of the Trail which ran right past its door, beginning about 1913. Our hearts go out to the folks there with whom we have visited and who were privileged to work in that well-preserved building.

That's the third historic building on the Trail (that we know of) that has burned down recently. The *Arrow* reported the fire at the vacant LaHood garage and restaurant near Whitehall, MT, which destroyed the canopy which had the Trail route painted on all four sides. We also reported that the small town of Curtiss, WI, suffered a terrible loss in the burning of the historic Curtiss Restaurant, on the Trail and full of antiques.

This should be another warning to those of us charged with the protection of antiquities. **C**

**ANSWER
TO "QUICK
QUIZ" ON
PAGE 2**

The old picture of the Yellowstone Trail was taken at "Point of Rocks" on the Harding Way (now Montana 2), about 10 miles south of Butte, Montana, near Pipestone Pass.

THE YT ASSOCIATION: ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND NEEDS

New readers of the *Arrow* should know that the only purpose of the modern Yellowstone Trail Association, incorporated in Autumn 2003, is to celebrate, preserve, and educate others about the Yellowstone Trail.

We currently have members in 22 states, Canada and Japan, all interested in the history of this important historic road and how it related to their communities.

In 2½ years our members have been active helping their communities celebrate the Trail through Trail Day activities, through marking the Trail, through presenting programs about the Trail, and planning auto runs. Several are good researchers, finding pictures, maps, articles and ephemera of the Trail (1912-1930). There are 174 large official YT road signs up in four states. (South Dakota marked the Trail border-to-border with unofficial signs several years ago.)

Some members actually travel the Trail for vacations and report back via the *Arrow* newsletter, entertaining us all with their tales of life off the Interstates.

Some members take the Trail to public arenas, beginning the task of establishing the Trail as a Scenic Byway, or publicizing it on public television stations. Some helped to create and dedicate a small park which they called (what else?) Yellowstone Trail park.

There is no budget to help pay for individual town events. Dues go to paying for the *Arrow* newsletter, postage, and communications to members. All four officers are volunteers.

The Association serves as a resource for information and advice to assist in member-instigated activities.

These past 12 months Association volunteers have served as consultants, prepared two brochures, prepared a large mailing to travel-promotion businesses, and prepared material for the 40-page YT Guide (due out Memorial Day), plus three issues of the *Arrow* newsletter.

But we NEED YOU and your ideas and participation. Join us. Volunteer. You'll feel better. **C**

AMERICAN ROAD MAGAZINE AND THE YT

The Yellowstone Trail has continued to have a really good presence in the *American Road* magazine.

In Volume III Number 4 the Yellowstone Trail Department article was "Life and Limbs," the story of Michael Dowling, a colorful multiple amputee. Dowling lost his legs, an arm, and part of the other hand in a blizzard. He became president of the YT Association, a banker, an international speaker, an auto route pathfinder, the first to drive the YT from Minnesota to the Yellowstone National Park, an auto dealer, a mayor, editor, Speaker of the Minnesota legislature, and a teacher.

There are ads for the Yellowstone Trail Association, two tourist destinations along the Trail and the book "Introducing the Yellowstone Trail and related YT goods. The preservation section, "American Road Project," has an article about the Red Brick Road located in King County, Washington, just east of Seattle. This historic road carried the Yellowstone Trail.

The most recent issue, Volume IV Number 1, has a slightly expanded section of Yellowstone Trail-related ads and an announcement of the May 5 YT events along Highway 29 in north central Wisconsin. (See more in Trailograms on page 7 of this *Arrow*.) The Yellowstone Trail article this issue is "Crossing Swords," the story both of the competition to the Trail and of the detractors of the Trail.

Members of the Yellowstone Trail Association can subscribe to the *American Road Magazine* at a reduced price. Each issue has material about the Yellowstone Trail along with articles about many of the old highways of America. To subscribe at the special YTA rate of \$11.96 for one year or \$22.95 for two years go to the Internet at:

<https://americanroad.magazinemanager.com/subscribe/?source=YTA>

OR, go to the YTA site, www.yellowstonetrail.org, then choose The new Yellowstone Trail Association, then click on Join, then on New membership benefit---click here. And then follow the directions.

OR, if you would prefer, call 1-877-285-5434 and mention the YTA. **C**

THE YELLOWSTONE TRAIL GOES TO CENTRAL AMERICA

Alice and John Ridge, editors of the *Arrow*, took a cruise to Central America in January and brought the YT along. The cruise was sponsored by the University of Pittsburgh as part of their "Seminar at Sea" series. As such, relevant guest lecturers spoke about Central American geologic, oceanic, historic and cultural topics between stops in Mexico, Guatemala, Costa Rica, Panama and Jamaica. Since they were going to go through the Panama Canal, that subject received much attention.

There were days when topics unrelated to the area were presented. The Ridges were asked to talk about the YT. So,



along with swim suits, sea sick pills and shorts, they packed the videotape they made of the history of the Trail.

"We did not expect a big audience because many passengers were from states not on the Trail

and we felt not many people knew about it. Wrong! We had a full house of 50 people! Surely they would rather be playing bingo, we said. Wrong again! They were truly interested and we were amazed at the number of people who had actually heard of the Trail and who asked thoughtful questions. Some piped up to say they lived on the Trail at one time or another.

We ran overtime and still people lingered to 'remember when.' Even ship staff tuned in. It was an exhilarating and gratifying experience," they reported. And the Trail didn't get sea sick! **C**



Yellowstone Trail Association

Attn: Tom Barrett, 340 Division Street North, Stevens Point, WI 54481



PRE-SORTED
STANDARD
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Stevens Point, WI
Permit #98

SUPPORT AND MEMBERSHIP

The purpose of the Yellowstone Trail Association is to get out the word about the Trail. Read the *Arrow* and support the Association by becoming a member. Meet others with a common interest. A membership brochure may have been enclosed in this issue. If yours is missing and you would like one, write or call us for one.

DMOs: The potential to promote tourism along this route is nearly untapped and substantial. Join to benefit from group action to promote travel in your area. Its real. **C**

THE ARROW

The Arrow is designed in the tradition of *The Arrow*, the newsletter of the original Yellowstone Trail Association early in the 20th century. *The Arrow* is now published sporadically as time and resources permit. Generally, only members of the Yellowstone Trail Association receive it in printed format. Occasionally it is sent to others with a potential interest in the Yellowstone Trail.

Questions, stories, and news items may be directed to: The YTA, John or Alice Ridge, P. O. Box 65, Altoona, WI, 54720-0065, **Phone** 715-834-5992. **E-mail:** jridge@yellowstonetrail.org **Web site response:** www.yellowstonetrail.org using the Response Form.

Questions or suggestions about the YTA or about opportunities for tourism agencies may be directed to: Tom Barrett, The Yellowstone Trail Association, 340 Division Street North, Stevens Point, WI 54481. **Phone:** 715-344-2556 or 800-236-4636 ext. 13

E-mail: tbarrett@spacvb.com **C**

LEARN ABOUT AND PROMOTE THE YT

Books about the history of the YT, reproduced YTA publications, official signs and stencils to mark the Trail, logos and t-shirts are all available from Yellowstone Trail Publishers run by two of the YTA founders and very active volunteers, Alice and John Ridge. An order blank was enclosed in this issue. If yours is missing, write or call us for one. **C**

