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Nebraska Lewis & Clark Bicentennial Commission: The Final Report to the Governor, Members of the Nebraska Legislature, and the People of Nebraska

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NEBRASKA

Lewis & Clark



BICENTENNIAL
COMMISSION



The Final Report to the Governor,
Members of the Nebraska Legislature,
and the People of Nebraska



Nebraska Lewis and Clark Bicentennial Commission

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NEBRASKA
(Nee-brath-ka)

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July 31, 2004

Dear Friends:

Chosen by the National Lewis & Clark Bicentennial Council as one of only 15 sites to host an official Lewis & Clark signature Event, Nebraska considers it a tremendous honor to present the Nebraska Lewis & Clark Bicentennial Commemoration. Welcome to the Corps of Discovery Festival at Ft. Atkinson and to First Tribal Council at Elmwood Park, in Omaha!

One of President Jefferson's primary directives to Lewis & Clark was to establish relations with American Indians. It was at Council Bluff on the Nebraska side of the river near Fort Calhoun, that Lewis & Clark's Corps of Discovery made their first contact with Native Americans, the Otoe-Missouria Tribes. This pivotal meeting is remembered as the First Tribal Council and marked a seminal point in the history of the United States. This First Tribal Council served as the first test of the Expedition's diplomacy and set a positive tone for the relationships that Lewis & Clark would have with other Native American tribes on their journey to the Pacific.

We Americans live in a remarkable country with a remarkable history. The goal of the Nebraska Lewis & Clark Bicentennial Commission is to provide you the opportunity to re-discover the extraordinary journey of Lewis & Clark and to re-discover the qualities of courage and determination which are so much a part of the American character.

Our collective American heritage has emerged from the combination of cultures that were here on this land for centuries and by dozens of cultures that have emigrated here in the last 400 years. This is our opportunity to learn, to be inspired and to appreciate the ethnic, cultural and racial differences that truly distinguish us as Americans.

Sincerely,

Ron Hull, Chairman
Nebraska Lewis & Clark Bicentennial Commission



Introduction

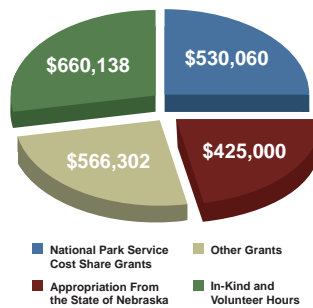
Noted historian Donald Jackson described Lewis and Clark as “the writingest” explorers of their time. It is simply amazing that a significant amount of their journals survived the explorations across the North American continent from 1803 to 1806. However, the task to organize those journal notes into a comprehensive report also proved to be a challenge that eventually took longer than the expedition itself.

This report documents another lengthy journey—and in a more timely manner. That journey is the one taken by the dedicated people who organized the 200th anniversary commemoration of Lewis and Clark’s journeys through what is now known as the state of Nebraska.

With this report the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial Commission describes its activities and reflects upon how the State of Nebraska’s overall investment was quadrupled into over \$2 million dollars worth of heightened awareness and appreciation of our local heritage that includes the story of Lewis and Clark and the indigenous nations they encountered. Over 100,000 Nebraska citizens

and visitors, hundreds of classrooms (including Native American students) were able to participate in a series of educational and entertaining events and programs from 2003 through 2006 with absolutely no admission charges.

A lasting legacy from the Nebraska Bicentennial Commemoration that deserves to be singled out above the rest is the historic rediscovery that occurred when members of the displaced Otoe-Missouria Tribe of Oklahoma were encouraged to journey north to encounter an important chapter in their history. They found sincere, interested, and respectful Nebraskans who wished to learn about the culture and heritage of this tribal nation who once called this their homeland.





The Commission

Beginnings of the Nebraska Bicentennial Commemoration can be traced back to a “long-standing fascination with the Lewis and Clark Expedition” by former Nebraska U.S. Representative Doug Bereuter. As early as 1980 he authored an amendment to the National Trails Act to establish at least one Lewis and Clark visitor center in each state along the Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail, ultimately resulting in the impressive Missouri River Basin Lewis & Clark Interpretive Trail & Visitor Center in Nebraska City. Throughout the 1990s the Congressman secured appropriations of almost \$1.5 million towards this center. In 1999 he was one of three founding co-chairs of the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial Congressional Caucus in the

House of Representatives and funded the national effort to observe the Bicentennial with proceeds from the minting of commemorative coins. Most importantly here, in 2000 Bereuter contributed to drafting LB1410 that was supported by then-Governor Mike Johanns and subsequently introduced in the Nebraska Unicameral by State Senator Roger Wehrbein from Plattsmouth. The Governor approved LB1410 on April 13, 2000, authorizing the creation of the Nebraska Lewis and Clark Bicentennial Commission (NLCBC or the Commission).

Governor Johanns immediately appointed Nebraska Educational Telecommunications executive Ron Hull to head the Commission.

LB1410 stipulated that a chair, a vice-chair, and six commissioners be appointed by the Governor, including one African American and a Native American. Additionally the bill required “designees” from the University of Nebraska–Lincoln, the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission, the Nebraska Commission on Indian Affairs, and the Nebraska State Historical Society. All commissioners during the life of the Commission, including those who served partial terms, are listed on the next page. Two members of the Commission were of Native American ethnicity and one was African American.



Ron Hull, Chair
Nebraska Educational Telecommunications

Jeanene Wehrbein, Vice Chair
Plattsmouth Chamber of Commerce

Judi gaiashkibos
Nebraska Commission on Indian Affairs

Judith Johnson
Wayne State University

Dr. Rudi Mitchell
*Carl T. Curtis Health Center
Macy, Nebraska*

Dr. Gary E. Moulton
University of Nebraska-Lincoln

Larry Ruth
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John Slader
Fort Atkinson State Historical Park

Leroy Stokes
USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service

Richard Williams
*National Park Service
Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail*

Hal Stearns
National Guard Brigadier General Retired

Roy Smith
Omaha, Nebraska

Lawrence Sommer
Nebraska State Historical Society

Michael Smith
Nebraska State Historical Society

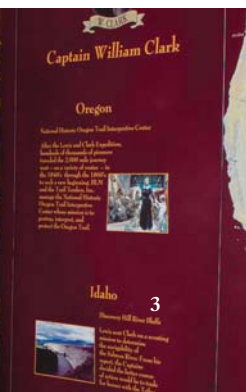
JoAnn McManus
Nebraska Division of Travel and Tourism

Dan Curran
Nebraska Division of Travel and Tourism

Christian Hornbaker
Nebraska Division of Travel and Tourism

The Commission began its work utilizing initial state funding and Challenge Cost Share funds from the National Park Service to create a strategic plan and submit a formal proposal for the Signature Event to the National Council for the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial. While gathering feedback from focus groups across the state and at monthly meetings, the Commission gathered information about local community resources, plans for local events, and Trail preparations and enhancements. A round table of invited advisors became an established part of each Commission meeting, resulting in an extensive and diverse list of Lewis and Clark projects in Iowa and Nebraska documented in the minutes.

Original legislation had instructed the NLCBC to seek I.R.C. 501(c)(3) status. This was later amended, as it was interpreted that such designation would be inappropriate for the Commission as a state agency. Therefore, Friends of the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial (Friends) was established as a Nebraska nonprofit corporation so that tax-deductible contributions could be accepted to support the commemorative activities proposed by the Commission. Furthermore, Friends obtained the I.R.C. 501(c)(3) status and also served as a convenient “pass-through” for a variety of other Nebraska Lewis and Clark projects under the umbrella of its Cooperative Agreement established with the Challenge Cost Share Program of the National Park Service.





acquired Louisiana Territory. Historically accurate education and entertainment were among Commission goals from the start. Major focus was placed on securing the involvement of the actual people who participated in this historic event with the expedition—the Otoe-Missouria Tribe, who now reside in Red Rock, Oklahoma.

The First Tribal Council had occurred near the site of Fort Atkinson State Historical Park. A National Signature Event at the park, which is located just east of Fort Calhoun, Nebraska (pop. 924), would require careful and thoughtful planning in order to attract and accommodate the intended audience to this setting. Therefore, the Commission issued an RFP (request for proposals) for an event planner. Vic Gutman & Associates (VGA) was selected to plan, manage, market, and raise funds for the event in close cooperation with the Commission staff.

In 2002, the Commission employed Vic Gutman & Associates of Omaha to develop a strategic plan. The strategic plan process resulted in the following Mission Statement:

The mission of the Nebraska Lewis and Clark Bicentennial Commission shall be to establish itself as the officially recognized lead organization for promoting and facilitating events and information within Nebraska, relevant to commemorative activities associated with the 200th anniversary of the historic Lewis and Clark Expedition of 1803–1806. This mission will be accomplished by promoting open exchanges of necessary information and by providing direction or oversight for relevant activities planned by the various communities, organizations, or individuals within our statewide arena. Focal points of the Commission will include

coordination of a national signature event with regional partners, interagency participation, public education and awareness, cultural sensitivity, Native American involvement, historical authenticity, and stewardship of the historic and natural resources to the Nebraska/Iowa portions of the trail.

A set of “Guiding Principles” for implementing this plan and the formal Signature Event proposal to the National Council are available within the online digital appendix to this document (available at www.lewisandclarkne.org).

The Signature Event was proposed to commemorate Lewis and Clark’s initial Tribal Council aimed at establishing diplomatic relations with Native Americans in the newly

Ron Hull provided tireless and effective leadership as chair of the Commission. His services would not have been possible without the generous donation of his time, offices, meeting space, and communication provided by Nebraska Educational Telecommunications. Hull was aided by a very capable and energetic second in Vice-Chair Jeanene Wehrbein of the Plattsmouth Chamber of Commerce. The Commission appointed Jim Swenson as Executive Director, and the proven management skills this high-level administrator brought from the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission were essential to the mission. Similarly, through the generosity of the Nebraska Division of Travel and Tourism, Mary Ethel Emanuel was able to lend her considerable expertise and enthusiasm to the role of Marketing Director. The lone paid



commission employee, the Coordinator, was also housed and cosponsored within Travel and Tourism. Initially Michelle Engel, then Paula Rhian, and finally Kim Bastemeyer served the Commission admirably as coordinators. The Commission staff also benefited greatly from pro bono legal consultation and clerical services on multitudes of contracts from the firm Ruth Mueller Robak LLC, thanks to Commissioner Larry Ruth.

Executive Director Jim Swenson broadened the Commission's perspective by participating in the Circle of State Advisors (COSA). Information from COSA was of great benefit to planning for the Nebraska commemoration, which was selected in a rigorous process as the seventh in the series of fifteen Signature Events to be held across the country. Commissioners and staff visited and observed early Signature Events in 2003. The Nebraska delegation made

observations and took these opportunities for early promotion of The First Tribal Council via a vendor booth with an attractive display provided by the Nebraska Division of Travel and Tourism. Ultimately, the Commission's strategic plan provided essential guidance throughout the two and one half years leading up to the Nebraska Signature Event and beyond.



Partnerships & Collaborations

Many partnerships and strategic alliances proved essential to the successful achievement of the goals that were developed as part of the strategic plan. The National Council for the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial provided wise counsel for Nebraska planners to formalize the most important of these alliances through signed agreements. It was thus an important

first step by the Nebraska Commission to sign a Memorandum of Understanding with the Otoe-Missouria Tribe of Oklahoma. The Tribe's participation in the commemoration of the First Tribal Council was not formally secured until negotiations took place between two heads of state. Otoe-Missouria Tribal Chairman James Grant accepted Governor

Mike Johanns' invitation to visit Nebraska in November of 2003. The following quote sums up the feeling of the Otoe-Missouria regarding the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial in Nebraska: *"This commemoration is important to our people on many levels," said Annette Arkeketa, Otoe-Missouria member and Nebraska Lewis and Clark Bicentennial*



Commission advisor. “We are coming back to our traditional homeland where our ancestors lived and where our tribal leaders had to make many difficult decisions. For us, this is about family, history, and also spirituality.” – Midland News, Valentine, NE. July 8, 2004.

Important in-state partnerships were facilitated by the broad institutional representation among the commissioners heretofore mentioned. The Nebraska Commission on Indian Affairs and communication with the four federally recognized tribes in Nebraska—the Omaha, the Ponca, the Santee Sioux, and the Winnebago—were key in understanding the Native American perspective toward commemorating the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial.

The Nebraska Game and Parks Commission was a strategic partner. It provided countless hours in the person of the Commission’s Executive Director and opened Nebraska state parks to many events sponsored by the NLCBC. Another important contribution to the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial in Nebraska was the special issue of *NEBRASKAland Magazine*: “America Looks West.” Besides adding important literary perspectives for the commemoration, the stunning images from that publication illustrated the beauty of the Lewis and Clark Trail in Nebraska.

The Nebraska Division of Travel and Tourism, within the Department of Economic Development, played a significant role. The Division managed the state appropriations that came to the Commission and provided major promotion of Lewis and Clark in Nebraska

through the talented work of the Commission’s Marketing Director. Communications and administrative support were also provided through the hiring and housing of an administrative coordinator for the Commission.

The Nebraska Department of Roads provided initial assistance by informing the Commission of maintenance and repair projects that would potentially impact the event at Fort Calhoun. Upon request, the Department made considerable adjustments to the scheduling of these works. Furthermore, in anticipation of the increased travel along the Lewis & Clark Scenic Byway, some 50 new Lewis and Clark signs were installed along U.S. Highway 75.

Visitor and convention bureaus, plus state and county tourism representatives from Iowa and Nebraska, came together under a collaboration known as the Iowa-Nebraska Coordinating Council as early as 1998. Since its inception, the Nebraska Commission has worked diligently to leverage the groundwork for sharing resources to promote the Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail that was laid by this initial interstate organization and also to cooperate closely with the Iowa Commission. Early on the Nebraska Commission solidified its partnership with the Iowa Lewis and Clark Commission by inclusion in the Memorandum of Understanding with the Otoe-Missouria. One of the more successful programs funded by the Iowa Commission was its Lewis and Clark Passport Education Program. Within the two years of this program the community of Brownville, Bellevue’s Fontenelle Forest, and the South Sioux City

Library were featured locations offering programs and passport stamps to visitors.

Cooperation that crossed borders was also exemplified by the development of a Quad County “Travelers Guide” just prior to the Signature Event. This guide was developed and distributed by tourism agencies in Pottawattamie County of Iowa along with Washington, Douglas, and Sarpy Counties in Nebraska. Hard copies were made available for promotion, as well as a digital version via the NLCBC Website.

Further collaboration beyond the Nebraska state line included NLCBC participation in the Lewis and Clark Midwest Trail States Native American Diplomacy Symposia. The seven participating states included Illinois, Missouri, Kansas, Nebraska, Iowa, South Dakota, and North Dakota. More details about the symposia will be presented later in this report.

Another significant collaboration resulted in the Lewis and Clark Tri-State brochure/map. It was a timely project launched by the Nebraska-Iowa Coordinating Council, which received considerable promotion and support from NLCBC. This colorful guide provided information about locations in Iowa, Nebraska, and Southeast South Dakota. Descriptions explained their significance to the Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail and listed other attractions in several communities along the Trail. Most importantly, it was broadly distributed by visitor and convention bureaus and information centers in sufficient advance of the Signature Event.





The Signature Event

By July 31, 1804, Lewis and Clark's Corps for Northwest Discovery had ascended the Missouri River beyond the confluence of the Platte and Missouri Rivers and found a bluff above the river that offered a view of the "most butifull prospects imagonable." It was on this "Councell Bluff" that these representatives of the young nation of America would begin to establish relations with the western Indian tribes and attempt to win their allegiance to the United States. This first official council with the Otoes and Missouriias began midmorning on August 3, 1804, near what is now Fort Atkinson State Historical Park. Exactly two hundred years later, the park would be the main site of the Nebraska Lewis and Clark Bicentennial Commemoration.

The Nebraska Lewis and Clark Bicentennial Commission expressed its desire from the outset to create a lasting legacy through the arts, which would endure long past the bicentennial and remind citizens of the significance of the expedition and the people they encountered. A drama and a concerto to be performed at Elmwood Park in Omaha were chosen as artistic works to fulfill this goal. These evening performances would complement the daytime family-type events being held at Fort Atkinson State Historical Park.

Drama scripts were solicited by Nebraska Repertory Theatre, which facilitated the selection process. Chicago playwright Carson

Grace Becker's "Ink and Elkskin" emerged as the dramatization of the meeting of the First Tribal Council. The script received review and consultation from a committee that included editor of the Lewis and Clark journals Commissioner Gary Moulton, Native American advisor Matt Jones, and three tribal members designated by the Otoe-Missouria Tribal Council. Nebraska Repertory Theatre held auditions for a cast that eventually included Native American actors and one Nebraska state senator, Dave Landis.

Shakespeare on the Green outdoor amphitheater in Elmwood Park was chosen as the site for the performances, providing considerable savings as an established venue.



Adjacent to the University of Nebraska at Omaha campus, the facility had the advantages of being well-known, accessibility from anywhere in the Metro area, and adequately lighted parking. Furthermore, the venue was enhanced by UNO administration's enthusiasm to provide support for the event.

Golden Globe- and Academy Award-nominated composer Philip Glass was commissioned to write his Piano Concerto No. 2 [*After Lewis and Clark.*] The second movement of the piece, "Sacagawea," was played in conjunction with the dramatization to nearly 25,000 people over three evenings of the Signature Event. The composition was played outdoors by UNL pianist Paul Barnes with accompaniment by renowned Native American flautist R. Carlos Nakai. A full performance of the concerto with the Omaha Symphony Orchestra was later premiered at Lincoln's Lied Center for Performing Arts on September 18, 2004, and a second full performance occurred at Omaha's Orpheum Theatre (September 24-25, 2004). It has since played in Boston (November 28, 2004), in Santa Cruz, California (August 6, 2005), and in Seattle (September 24-25, 2005). Each evening performance also opened with a stirring rendition of "America the Beautiful" by African American singer Annette Murrell.

It was important to the Nebraska Lewis and Clark Commission, as part of the Nebraska Lewis and Clark Bicentennial, to facilitate a pilgrimage by representatives from the Otoe-Missouria Tribe back to their former homeland in Nebraska. Travel arrangements were subsidized by the Commission that brought a delegation of more than 100 tribal council leaders, elders, and members to share their culture and perspective in ceremonies, panels,

and discussions throughout the commemoration event.

It was significant that the history of the Otoe-Missouria people provided by the tribe was prominently featured in the Signature Event Souvenir Program. This summary of their heritage came about as a product of their participation and has been made available for educational purposes among the tribe. The Nebraska Lewis and Clark Bicentennial Commission presented the tribe with a DVD of the "Ink and Elkskin" dramatization and complete video recordings of the entire Signature Event. In a reciprocal gesture, the Otoe-Missouria presented an impressive gift to the Commission during a 2005 visit by members to Red Rock, Oklahoma—a maquette bust of Chief Standing Bear. This sculpture of the famous Nebraska figure and Ponca chief currently resides at the Fort Atkinson State Historical Park Visitor Center.

Flags are an important part of Native American ceremonies. A Native American Veteran Color Guard provided by the Otoe-Missouria Tribe of Oklahoma was a part of each of the First Tribal Council evening performances for the Signature Event in Elmwood Park. Also, the flags of the State of Nebraska and of the Omaha Tribe were included in ceremonies at the 2005 Otoe-Missouria Encampment in Red Rock, Oklahoma. There are numerous examples of exchanges between the cultures throughout the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial Commemoration, as the Commission was committed to making awareness of Otoe-Missouria and all Native American culture a legacy in Nebraska.

The daytime Corps of Discovery commemoration at Fort Atkinson State

Historical Park was set on approximately twenty-five acres of park property below the bluff of the replica fort. However, it would be necessary to supplement the facility by using fifty acres of adjacent private land for parking. The additional acres were leased for two seasons, and special farming techniques were implemented to help the land withstand the thousands of cars and the Midwest's unpredictable early August weather.

The family-style event offered a variety of stages and stations with educational and historical exhibits. An estimated 50,000 attended Fort Atkinson State Historical Park area for the four-day Signature Event. Attendees were treated to engaging presentations by fiddlers, Native American dancers, and an encampment of buckskinners. Visitors shopped for Native American and period crafts and enjoyed foods from a variety of cultures. Members of the Otoe-Missouria entertained and educated audiences with panels discussing such topics as history and culture, tribal participation in the U. S. military, storytelling, and the perspective of youth and elders in the tribe. Capacity audiences filled air-conditioned tents on the event grounds to hear nationally renowned Lewis and Clark experts such as Dayton Duncan, James Ronda, Hal Stearns, and Gary Moulton.

Ten miles to the north, on the campus of Dana College, another 5,000 people were estimated to have visited the National Park Service's Corps of Discovery II: 200 Years to the Future during the four days of the commemoration. School buses shuttled visitors from Fort Atkinson State Historical Park to the Corps II site in Blair at regular and convenient intervals throughout the Corps of Discovery. Corps II also stopped in three other Nebraska communities immediately



surrounding the Signature Event: Nebraska City (July 16–18), Omaha’s Lewis and Clark Landing (July 24–27), and Macy (August 9–12). Expertise, consultation, and significant funding established the National Park Service as a key partner with the NLCBC, and it was fitting that as a photo opportunity Governor Johanns visited Corps II during its stop on the Omaha Riverfront in the shadow of the National Park Service’s new Midwest Regional Headquarters. The Governor took advantage of this opportunity to invite everyone to the upcoming Signature Event.

Corps II sought to bring what is essentially a National Park, the Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail, from community to community, keeping as close as possible to the route of the original Corps 200 years earlier. This traveling exhibit included two tents. One tent housed an interpretive exhibit that could be toured with audio narrative about the expedition. The second, the Tent of Many Voices, was equipped for live demonstrations, lectures, and cultural presentations from tribes, other local cultures, and federal agency partners.

A group of reenactors retracing Lewis and Clark’s journey had evolved into one of the more popular attractions of the Bicentennial commemoration. The Discovery Expedition of St. Charles (DESC) were working their way up the Missouri River following the Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail and portraying the men of the expedition with authentic encampments, watercraft, and period costume. These colorful reenactors gave presentations and answered questions for learners of all ages, who were shuttled by regularly scheduled buses from the Fort Atkinson State Historical Park grounds to the DESC campsite five miles away at Boyer Chute Wildlife Refuge.

Two “direct descendents” had their “day in the sun” on the morning of August 3, 2004, as part of the activities at Fort Atkinson State Historical Park. Peyton “Bud” Clark, who is the great-great-great grandson of William Clark and a member of DESC, was deeply honored to be able to participate in a re-creation, 200 years to the day and hour, of the First Tribal Council. This ceremony was part of the dedication of the First Tribal Council Monument – Phase II: “The Meeting Site.” The stainless steel sculpture designed by Blair artist Milt Heinrich depicts a compass face overlaid by crossed quill and peace pipe. In the dedication reenactment, Clark was able to share a peace pipe with Bat Shunatona, who is also a direct descendant of a participant in the original First Council, Otoe-Missouria chief Big Horse. Throughout the bicentennial observance, Shunatona has been a valuable advisor to the NLCBC as a liaison to the Otoe-Missouria tribe. Bat currently serves as Tribal Treasurer of the tribe in Red Rock, Oklahoma, and retains a membership in the Omaha-area Mouth of the Platte Chapter of the Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation.

Phase one of the First Council Monument had been completed and officially dedicated August 3, 2003. The Washington County Historical Society raised over \$500,000 for the entire project (\$5,000 of which came from NLCBC). Native American artist Oreland C. Joe had been commissioned to produce bronze statues of Lewis, Clark, Lewis’s dog Seaman, and an interpreter holding council with Otoe Chief Shon-go-ton-go (Big Horse) and Missouri leader We-the-a (Hospitality). The life-sized figures were installed just north of the Visitor Center on Fort Atkinson State Historical Park grounds and include a walking trail and interpretive signs. The entire First

Council Monument was subsequently donated to Fort Atkinson State Historical Park.

The following year on July 31, 2004, on the opening day of the Signature Event, the National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration’s Geodetic Survey dedicated a brass commemorative marker, which now rests along the winding sidewalk between Fort Atkinson State Historical Park’s Visitor Center and the five bronze statues. It is one in a series of markers beginning in Monticello in Virginia and ending at Fort Clatsop in Oregon and will become part of the National Spatial Reference System. A ceremonial plaque, furnished by the Professional Surveyors Association of Nebraska (PSAN), was placed next to the survey cap explaining the historic significance of the Peace Medal, its latitude and longitude, and the distance from the starting point of the Corps of Discovery.

The U.S. Mint chose Tuesday, the final day of the Signature Event, for the unveiling of the third in the Mint’s series of Westward Journey nickels. To honor the “keelboat” nickel, Butch Bovier of Onawa, Iowa, used a trailer to bring one of his full-sized replica keelboats to the event site. From the deck of this popular attraction, Commissioner Gary Moulton and then-Lieutenant Governor Dave Heineman joined dignitaries from the Mint and the First National Bank of Omaha to give comments for the occasion. Immediately following the speeches, approximately 2,000 people (including 100 children from Fremont’s Grant Elementary) flocked to purchase the new “keelboat” nickels at face value as an investment or collector item. The nickels would not be available to the rest of the nation until August 16.



Within the Fort Atkinson State Historical Park Visitor Center, a stunning group of historic Lewis and Clark documents was assembled on special loan from the Oklahoma Historical Society for public display during the four-day event. The first document bears the signatures of Lewis and Clark, dated August 30, 1804. It is Clark's written version of the address made by Lewis to a band of Yankton Sioux Indians at Calumet Bluff (near Yankton, South Dakota). The second document, a Peace Medal Certificate presented to Otoe warrior Big Axe at Lewis and Clark's Fish Camp bivouac, also bears both leaders' signatures. A third document on display was a January 4, 1806, letter written in French by Thomas Jefferson, encouraging tribal leaders of the Otoe-Missouria and six other Indian nations to visit him in Washington, D.C. The Nebraska State Historical Society (NSHS) assisted by providing conservation expertise for the historical documents, which were shipped from Oklahoma by armored truck to NSHS's Gerald R. Ford Conservation Center in Omaha, Nebraska. Rounding out the unprecedented exhibit at Fort Atkinson State Historical Park was a plant specimen tag scribed by Lewis from the private collection of Dr. Gary Moulton.

One hundred years ago the Nebraska State Historical Society and the Nebraska Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) helped dedicate the Fort Calhoun Lewis and Clark monument that commemorated the centennial of the historic 1804 council with the Otoe-Missouria. In 1904, NSHS Director Jay Barrett noted, "This first council with the Indians was full of meaning. In the course of international diplomacy this republic inherited the fruits of two and a half centuries of discovery and exploration and established relations with the

western Indian tribes." (NSHS Newsletter September/October 2004). The monument consists of a plaque embedded in a boulder in Fort Calhoun's West Market Square, and it was rededicated as part of the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial events held on July 31, 2004. Nebraska Commissioner and Director of NSHS Larry Sommer recapped the speech Barrett made one hundred years ago. The community of Fort Calhoun entertained thousands of visitors with various activities during the Nebraska Signature Event, including black powder and archery shoots, a William Clark birthday celebration, a fiddle contest, raffles, vendors, book signings, commemorative stamp cancellations, and special exhibitions at Washington County Museum.

The use of buses proved essential for transportation within the event, enabling one-stop personal vehicle parking. Tour buses from York, Lincoln, and communities throughout the area brought groups for day trips that included both the daytime events in and around Fort Atkinson State Historical Park and a visit to the evening performance in Omaha. Buses brought school-aged children from area summer camps and daycares to Monday's events. Activities focusing on hands-on activities catered to this age group.

In an August 4, 2004, article in the *Omaha World-Herald*, reporter David Hendee quoted William Davenport, a representative from the U.S. Bureau of Land Management. Davenport has attended all seven Signature Events, noting that Nebraska's event "flowed seamlessly. It's been amazing. Well organized. Well attended." Given all that has been listed above, that is truly "astonishing"—a word that Hendee reported being heard often at the commemoration.

Overall Nebraska Lewis and Clark Bicentennial Signature Event attendance of more than 75,000 exceeded all expectations. Such excellent turnout of citizens and visitors can largely be attributed to the media partners established for the Commission through the work of Vic Gutman & Associates. KETV Channel 7 contributed \$192,000 in promotional television air time, and Waitte Radio provided another \$122,000 on its stations. VGA's Media Report 2004 provided copies of no less than 100 clippings from the *Omaha World-Herald* that specifically referenced the Nebraska Lewis and Clark Bicentennial Commemoration event during the period from December 2003 through the end of the summer 2004. Hundreds of similar clippings from other Nebraska and Iowa papers were also provided in the report. It is also worthy of note that frequent attendee at NLCBC meetings, *World-Herald* reporter David Hendee, was publicly recognized for his coverage with awards from the Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation and the Nebraska Division of Travel and Tourism.

Another supporting partner of the Nebraska Lewis and Clark Bicentennial Commission was the University of Nebraska at Omaha's Peter Kiewit Institute (PKI). PKI provided the Commission with an elaborate Website in order to assist in promoting all commemorative activities in the tri-state area. Hosted at no charge since November 2002, the Website has provided timely public notice and minutes of all Nebraska Lewis and Clark Commission meetings. Particularly for the Signature Event, information was posted on the site as early as late March and was updated continuously throughout the summer as new information became available. The Web address, www.lewisandclarkne.org, was printed



on all promotional materials, and as a result the site received 22,260 visitors between March and August 2004. Traffic peaked in July as nearly 9,000 visitors logged on for Signature Event information (Excerpted from the 2004 Marketing/Communications Report by Vic Gutman & Associates).

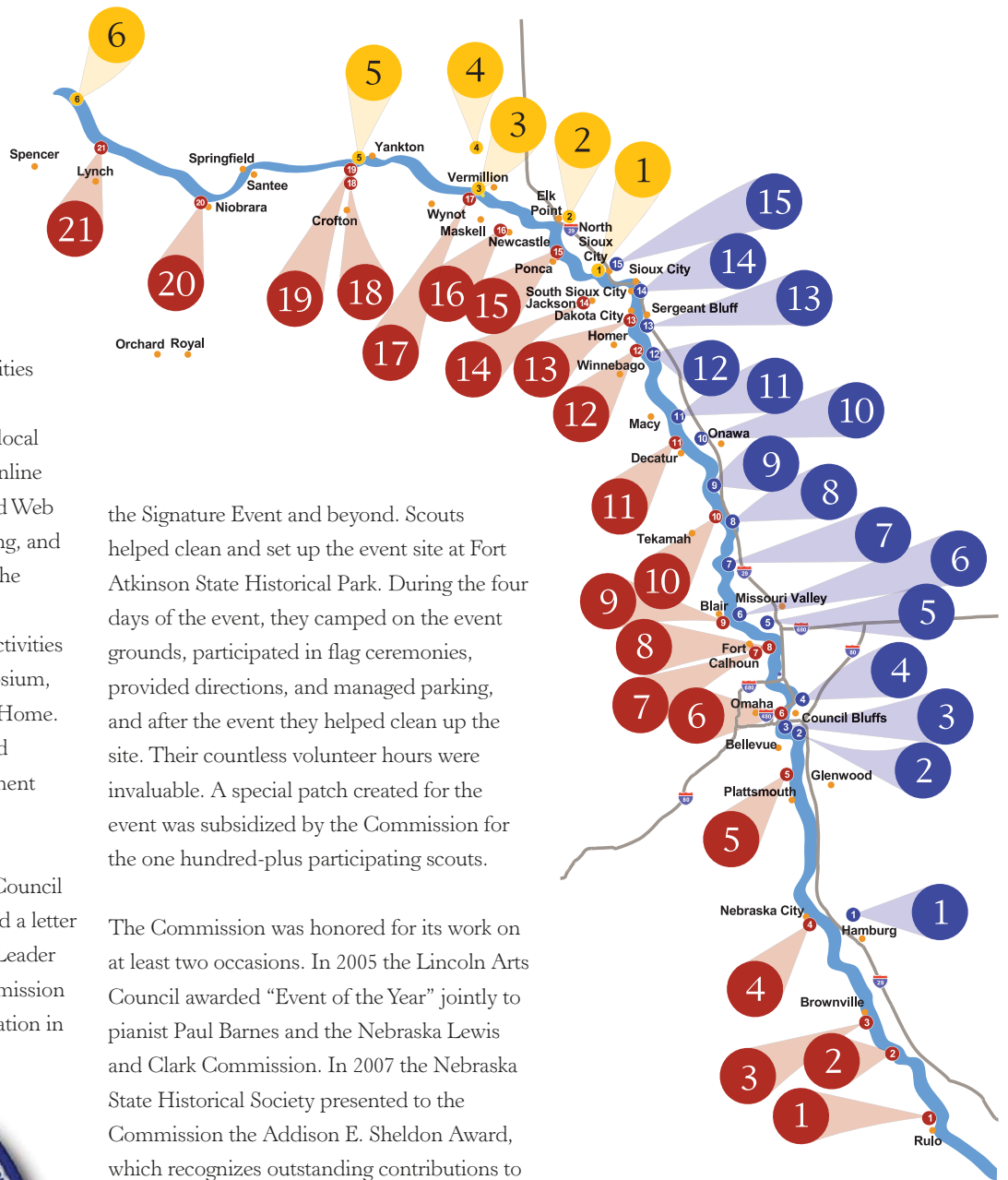
Prior to the Signature Event and throughout the Bicentennial, communities from both sides of the Missouri River bordering Nebraska have posted their local Lewis and Clark related events to an online calendar database, which also provided Web links to MapQuest™ directions, lodging, and attractions. Furthermore, the site was the central point of event information for subsequent Commission-sponsored activities including the Native American Symposium, the Keelboat Return, and the Journey Home. It is estimated that PKI has contributed \$25,000 per year in volunteer management and free site hosting.

In November 2002 the Mid-America Council of the Boy Scouts of America presented a letter of support to the Commission. Scout Leader Randy Yates attended numerous Commission meetings and facilitated scout participation in



the Signature Event and beyond. Scouts helped clean and set up the event site at Fort Atkinson State Historical Park. During the four days of the event, they camped on the event grounds, participated in flag ceremonies, provided directions, and managed parking, and after the event they helped clean up the site. Their countless volunteer hours were invaluable. A special patch created for the event was subsidized by the Commission for the one hundred-plus participating scouts.

The Commission was honored for its work on at least two occasions. In 2005 the Lincoln Arts Council awarded “Event of the Year” jointly to pianist Paul Barnes and the Nebraska Lewis and Clark Commission. In 2007 the Nebraska State Historical Society presented to the Commission the Addison E. Sheldon Award, which recognizes outstanding contributions to the preservation and interpretation of Nebraska history. The Commission was specifically selected for its “tireless advocacy, research, and public awareness related to Lewis and Clark.”





2005 Commemorative Events

In the spring of 1805 after wintering at Fort Mandan, Lewis and Clark sent Sgt. Pryor to take the keelboat back down the Missouri River to St. Louis bearing plant and animal specimens collected on the Great Plains. In 2005, the Nebraska Lewis and Clark Commission, using remaining funds from the Signature Event, sponsored a Keelboat Symposium in each of eight communities along the Missouri River. A reenactment of the keelboat's return, staged by the Discovery Expedition of St. Charles, traveled through Nebraska April 16–26, 2005. The keelboat docked in the following communities: South Sioux City, Dakota City, Decatur, Blair, Omaha, Plattsmouth, Nebraska City, and Brownville.

Assistance from the Nebraska Humanities Council provided a roster of distinguished Lewis and Clark experts who made presentations at each Keelboat Symposium. These scholars and presenters included Gary

Moulton; Matt Jones; Darrel W. Draper; Annette Arkeketa; John Slader; and Pat Day, who portrayed Meriwether Lewis's mother.

Another featured performer was one of the passengers on the keelboat's 10-day journey. Pee Dee the black-tailed prairie dog was a star in the presentation "He Made It Alive: The Prairie Dog Journey East to Monticello, 1805." Pee Dee was provided courtesy of the Missouri River Basin Lewis & Clark Interpretive Trail & Visitor Center in Nebraska City, where he now resides.

Nebraska communities "off the Trail" were also able to learn about the significance of the expedition and the people who inhabited this land for thousands of years before Lewis and Clark. This was largely due to a partnership between the NCLBC with the Nebraska Humanities Council (NHC). NHC participated within a larger program by Missouri Humanities Council, "Changed

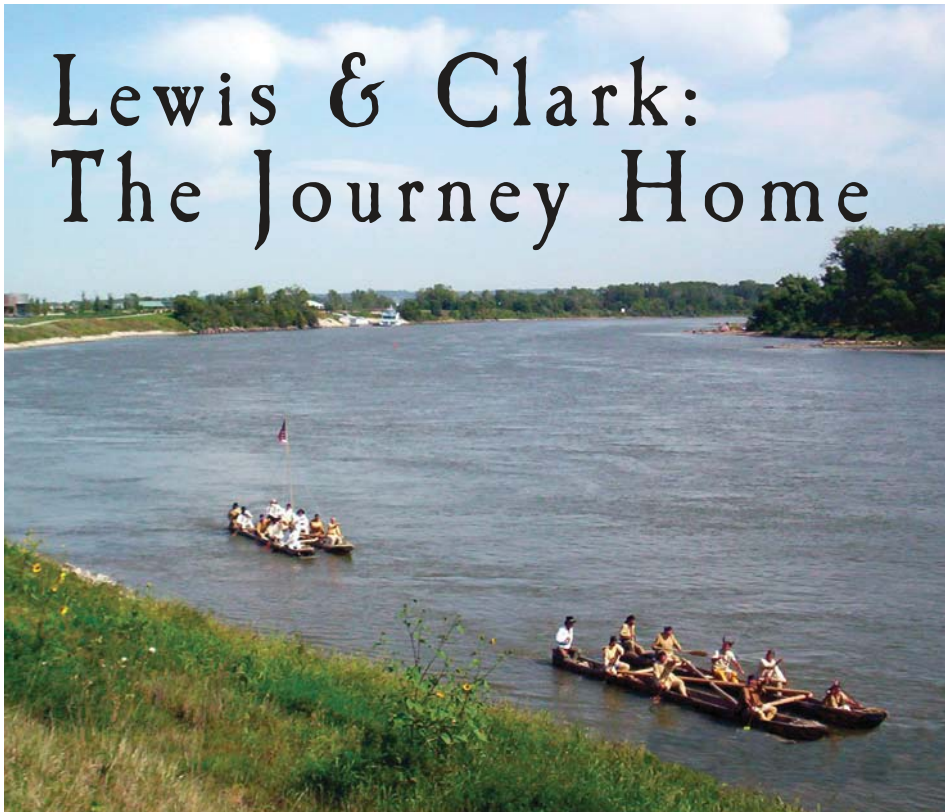
Lives: Lewis and Clark Meet the West" Program. In 2004–2005 and again in 2005–2006, this project funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities provided grants enabling communities located within a day's travel of the Missouri River in Missouri, Iowa, Kansas, and Nebraska to bring in noted Lewis and Clark and Native American speakers. In Nebraska these mini-series (4 programs each) were held in communities such as Odell, Beatrice, Genoa, Plattsmouth, Madison, Niobrara, Peru, Brownville, South Sioux City, Neligh, Gresham, Oakland, Pawnee City, Stromsburg, and Bancroft. Additionally, the NHC had placed a Lewis and Clark theme on its Great Plains Chautauqua series. "From Sea to Shining Sea" traveled in 2002 to St. Paul, in 2003 to Plattsmouth, in 2004 to Neleigh and Beatrice, in 2005 to Sidney and Lexington, and in 2006 to Albion and Alliance.



In 2005 the Midwest Trails States Native American Symposia Program sought to broaden the circle of interest beyond Corps of Discovery enthusiasts, specifically giving voice to important but under-represented perspectives. These symposia offered a forum to examine and compare the diplomatic cultural practices of the United States and

those of the Indian nations met by the Corps of Discovery. On April 9, 2005, Iowa held the first of these symposia in this area at Western Historic Trails Center in Council Bluffs, Iowa. The Nebraska symposium, which was underwritten and managed by NLCBC, occurred September 26, 2005, on the Fort Omaha Campus of Metro Community

College. Excellent attendance at the Fort Omaha symposium was highlighted by the presence from a class of high school students from the Umo N Ho N Nation High School in Macy. Papers from the presenters (Robert Miller, James Riding In, and Leonika R. Charging) will be made available in the online digital appendix (www.lewisandclarkne.org).



Nebraska State Historical Society with support from the Nebraska Lewis and Clark Bicentennial Commission and the National Park Service, including volunteers from Mouth of the Platte. The series of events, which brought 7,500 people to Ponca State Park, began with the Missouri River History Conference (August 31–September 1) at the new state-of-the-art Missouri National Recreational River Resource and Education Center. A listing of the distinguished group of conference presenters (and some of their papers) will be made available in the online digital appendix. Simultaneously the Education Center Library hosted original signed prints by George Catlin featuring animal and Native American scenes (early 1800s) of the Great Plains—courtesy of the Museum of Nebraska Art in Kearney, Nebraska.

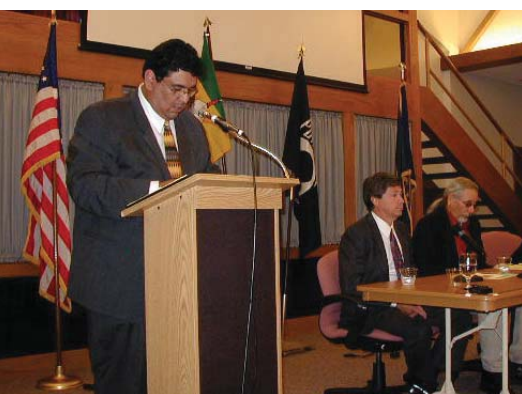
In the fall of 2006, the Nebraska Lewis and Clark Bicentennial Commission again focused on education through hands-on activities, history, and the arts to commemorate the Corps of Discovery's return voyage. The Commission raised over \$200,000 to provide another series of free programs dubbed "Lewis & Clark: The Journey Home" with venues in

three Nebraska communities along the Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail—Ponca, Omaha, and Nebraska City.

The Ponca Journey Home Event was held over the 2006 Labor Day weekend. It was a collaborative effort between the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission and the

On Friday, September 1, over 300 fourth-grade students from the Ponca area participated in a series of educational interactive stations presented by Ponca State Park staff and volunteers. Activities included a tour of Interpretive Center exhibits on flora, fauna, minerals, and fossils; journaling and plant specimen preservation; arts and crafts; and Lewis and Clark-style cooking.

Supplementing the conference, the Ponca State Park river access served as a two-day stopover



for the reenactors from St. Charles, Missouri, providing living history interpretation about the Corps of Discovery to park visitors. Additionally, the National Park Service's Corps of Discovery II: 200 Years to the Future set up in the Visitor Center parking lot with a full slate of speakers in the "Tent of Many Voices" September 2-5.

The Omaha Journey Home Event included a unique collaboration with some of Omaha's best museums and attractions. Vic Gutman & Associates was brought in once again and facilitated a fabulous series of events over three days that included a Student Field Day, a Family Festival, and a concert by the Omaha Symphony featuring Paul Barnes. The anticipation of large crowds moving from place to place downtown would require a large corps of volunteer guides to give directions and distribute schedules. Museum foundation members, the Mouth of the Platte, and local Boy Scout troops stepped up into this role.

On Friday, September 8, nearly 2,500 public, parochial, and Native American school children from Eastern Nebraska experienced half-day field trips at one of two of Omaha's most popular venues. Arvel Bird, an award-winning Native American violinist, played for students at Joslyn Art Museum's Witherspoon Hall. Other students visited Henry Doorly Zoo and were greeted by Pierre Cruzatte (portrayed by Daniel Slosburg), who gave brief presentations about the expedition interspersed with his lively fiddle playing. Students then viewed the IMAX movie *Lewis & Clark: The Great Journey West*.

For the Saturday Family Festival, an estimated 11,350 people visited venues that included the Omaha Children's Museum, Joslyn Art

Museum, Durham Western Heritage Museum, Lauritzen Botanical Gardens, Omaha's W. Dale Clark Library, and the new Visitor Center in the National Park Service Midwest Regional Headquarters on Omaha's Riverfront. Many took advantage of retro buses and trolleys that moved people smoothly between locations where festivalgoers found interactive activities and were educated and entertained by leading Lewis and Clark experts. The festival was also graced with traveling performances from the Lewis and Clark Fife and Drum Corps of St. Charles, Missouri.

As rain cancelled the outdoor concert and fireworks display originally scheduled for Saturday night, these events were moved to the Holland Performing Arts Center on Sunday. The Omaha Symphony with Paul Barnes played from the Phillip Glass piano concerto *After Lewis and Clark* along with patriotic and popular selections including Gershwin's popular "Rhapsody in Blue." Additionally, Otoe-Missouria member Matt "Sitting Bear" Jones dramatically interpreted the famous speech from the Trial of Standing Bear. Newly elected Otoe-Missouria Tribal Chairman Michael Harwell and Omaha Tribal Chairman Mark Peniska made comments and were welcomed with traditional gift blankets.

One of the final programs sponsored by the Nebraska Lewis and Clark Bicentennial Commission was the Native American Art Show. This collection showcased the enduring creative spirit of the four federally recognized tribes of Nebraska as well as the Otoe-Missouria. The exhibit competition was by invitation only through a juried process managed by Omaha Tribe member Ernie Ricehill and limited to enrolled members of the Winnebago, Omaha, Santee Sioux,

Northern Ponca and Otoe-Missouria tribes. Thirty works were featured in the Nebraska Arts Council's Showcase Gallery. The exhibit opened September 8, was on display as part of the Family Festival, and continued through September 22. Interest in this unique Native American Exhibit resulted in shows at Winnebago and Lincoln.

The final venue for the Journey Home event was held in Nebraska City on the weekend of September 16-17. "Farewell from Nebraska" offered daytime presentations at the Missouri River Basin Lewis & Clark Interpretive Trail & Visitor Center by Gary Moulton and Amy Mossett. Three hundred students attended programming by the Discovery Expedition of St. Charles. An evening dinner cruise on the *Spirit of Brownville* with Moulton and Mossett sold out. Participants departed from Nebraska City riding downriver to Brownville and were returned by bus. On Sunday, storyteller Dr. Royal Eckert told Pawnee Indian stories in the MRB Center's earthlodge, bringing the total attendance to nearly 2,000.





A Legacy of Education

The Nebraska Lewis and Clark Commission continues to thoughtfully consider how best to ensure the goals established in its original strategic plan can live as a timeless legacy—specifically to study the significance of the expedition, the indigenous nations they encountered, and the value of reflecting back on our heritage. The Commission also wishes to assist planners of other upcoming heritage commemorations as well as the tercentennial of the Lewis and Clark Expedition in 2103.

The Commission believes that one way to ensure that Lewis and Clark resources are known, monitored, and utilized for generations to come is to follow the lead of other states and

conduct an inventory of assets related to the Corps of Discovery and Native American culture. There were many such resources rediscovered during the Bicentennial Commemoration. Others were enhanced, and new ones were created.

The Commission appointed a Legacy Assets Committee to launch a program to conduct a comprehensive inventory of Lewis and Clark assets on both sides of the Missouri River as it borders Nebraska. Guidance from the Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail of the National Park Service has assisted this committee in training volunteers in Ponca, Omaha, and Nebraska City. Volunteers were

trained in techniques to record quality data, utilization of GPS devices, and submitting asset information to online interactive database made available at the NCLCB Website by the Peter Kiewit Institute.

The Trail itself is made up of hiking and biking trails, interpretive signs, and visitor centers that are “place based,” but there are many resources that include educational curricula, performances, and curricula that are more ephemeral in nature. The Passport Program of the Iowa Lewis and Clark Commission, the educational trunks developed by the Army Corps of Engineers, Creighton’s Lewis and Clark Musical, and the stamp exhibition that



was on display for some time at Boystown are just some of the examples of resources for which this inventory hopes to provide an enduring index.

Data collected has included current location (by GPS coordinates where feasible), current condition, threats, ownership, management and required maintenance, and digital images when possible. A category for Bicentennial relationship will allow future researchers to evaluate the broader impact of the Nebraska Lewis and Clark Bicentennial

Commemoration. This inventory seeks to serve as a means for carrying on stewardship of the land and resources that make up our portion of the Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail for many generations to come.

Another legacy activity of the Commission has been to subsidize distribution of the special *NEBRASKAland Magazine* issue “America Looks West” for inclusion in every school library in the state. And finally, the Commission has sought means to ensure that its mission and goals are carried forward by

another potential collaboration forming from many of the same stakeholders who stepped forward for the Bicentennial. Stay tuned.

In summary, this publication, its online appendix, and the assets inventory are intended to provide a comprehensive index that the Nebraska Lewis and Clark Commission wishes to endure. The evaluation of the merit or worth of this Commission and the commemoration it facilitated remains for those who will take the time to review and utilize these legacies.



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Lessons Learned

- Tribal nations deserve appropriate protocol and effective diplomacy.
- Heritage commemorative events should be free to the public, provide one-stop parking, and provide air conditioning in summer months.
- Roundtable discussions with advisors provided great opportunities for broad inclusion and partnership.
- There is value in moving Commission meeting locations.
- Hiring an event planner is key to a successful event.
- People valued being able to park the car for the day.
- Step-on guides for buses did not appear to be crucial.
- It is best to use established speaker bureaus if they exist.
- Media partners (TV, radio, newspaper) can help ensure a successful event.
- The creation of an identity (with a logo) helps in promotion and fundraising.
- Emphasizing education with interactive activities boosts attendance by children.
- Creation of a separate I.R.C. 501(3)(c) helps facilitate fundraising.
- Partner with state and federal agencies in order to utilize their resources.



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Dakota City Fish Camp II
Dakota City Lookout Enhancement
Lewis & Clark Natural Resource District
Lewis and Clark: An Authentic 1804 Experience
Lewis and Clark Interpretive Signage
Along the Tri-State Trail
Lewis and Clark Then & Now Boy Scout Camporee
Missouri River Basin Lewis & Clark
Interpretive Trail & Visitor Center:
Tonwantonga Earth Lodge
Lewis & Clark Interpreters Academy
NE/IA Bicentennial Coordinating Council:
NE/IA/SD Trail Map
Nebraska Commission on Indian Affairs Pow Wow
Nebraska Humanities Council:
Changed Lives Lewis & Clark Meet the West Series
Beatrice Chautauqua 2004
The George Shannon Trail
The Nature of Lewis & Clark on the Great Plains
Tribal Interpretive Partnership Initiative (TIPI)
Washington County Historical Society:
Council Bluff Monument

**The Executive Committee:
Jim Swenson, Jeanene Wehrbein,
Larry Ruth, and Ron Hull.**

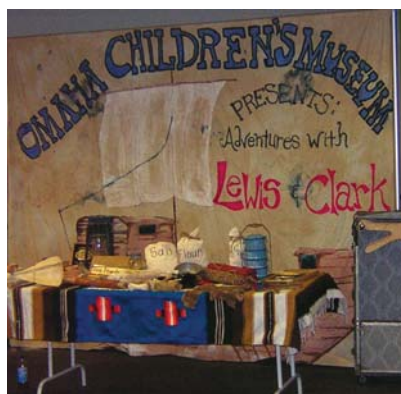




Photo by Eric Fowler