

For release week beginning April 23:

Educator/writer Larry McClure is a member of the Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation and director of Tualatin Heritage Center. He has been following the historic path of the Corps of Discovery until they leave present-day Oregon.

Week ending April 29: From John Day Dam area to the Walla Walla River

Highlights: Getting more horses to help carry baggage is still a priority as the Expedition visits villages along the Columbia. At one stop, Sacagawea gives up two of her leather outfits to help pay for one animal. The men smoke with tribal leaders and then everyone dances: first with fiddle music provided by the Corps of Discovery and then a traditional circle dance of the tribe. The captains notice language differences of tribes we know today as the Yakama, Umatilla, Cayuse and Walla Walla Indians. At today's Walla Walla River they describe how fishermen use bone hooks, seines and weirs. This is also where they learn that cutting cross country (through present-day Dayton, Washington) will save them 80 miles. They continue replenishing their food supply by buying dogs, but find little firewood to prepare their meals. The captains give medical aid to several Walla Walla Indians in return for help crossing the Columbia near present-day Wallula.

Words from the Journals: The men experience difficulty walking on shore: "most of the party complain of the soreness of their feet and legs this evening; it is no doubt caused by walking over the rough stones and deep sands after being several months accustomed to soft soil." Walla Walla Chief Yellept "appeared much gratified at seeing us return, invited us to remain at his village three or four days and assured us that we should be furnished with plenty of such food as they had themselves and some horses to assist us in our journey." Chief Yellept, who they first met last October, gives Clark a fine white horse in hopes of obtaining a kettle, but the captain says they can't give up any more equipment. Instead, the chief accepts Clark's sword, ammunition and other small items.

Today's connections: The Corps of Discovery has now said farewell to the country that will officially become Oregon in 53 years. For the next six months, they continue to make careful records of what they see and do, even when splitting into several groups across present-day Montana. Near disasters continue to stalk the mission, but they survive to reach St. Louis. On the way down the Missouri, they meet trappers and traders already moving west based on information sent to Jefferson from Fort Mandan. It has taken us 200 years to understand the many accomplishments of the Expedition and the legacies we share because of it. Still, more questions remain. The one national organization whose mission is keeping the flame alive is the Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation. See www.lewisandclark.org for details on how to join.

Bicentennial events in the Pacific Northwest: The Tamastsklikt Cultural Institute operated by the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation hosts the last Oregon visit by the National Park Service Corps of Discovery II Traveling Exhibition April 29-May 7. The museum (exit 216, I-84) provides traditional exhibits as well as an outdoor living history program to demonstrate tribal life then and now.

Special thanks to Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation members, particularly historian Barb Kubik, for assisting with this series. See www.lewisandclark.org. To follow the story, click "200 Years Ago This Week" at www.thejourneycontinues.org. Better yet, read the actual journal entries at

<http://libtextcenterunl.edu/lewisandclark/index.html> For Bicentennial activities in Oregon, go to www.lcbo.net. Comments should be directed to education@lcbo.net.