

LIFE TIME MEMBERS



Horace Axtell and Wilfred "Scottie" Scott

Lifetime Membership was presented by the Nez Perce Trail Foundation to two outstanding elders of the Nez Perce Tribe during the Big Hole Memorial on August 6, 2005. Horace Axtell and Wilfred Scott were recognized for their long time dedication to the ceremonial presentations they conduct. They commit many hours of travel and time to the honoring of all Nez Perce warriors by performing very moving and solemn Pipe Ceremonies. All men and women who have served in the service to the United States are invited to participate in the ceremony. This recognition for these two elders is a small token of the appreciation the Foundation feels for their service.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR NOTES

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year from all of us at the Nez Perce Trail Foundation.

This Fall has been a busy time for the NPTF. On October 1, the Board of Directors met in Lewiston, Idaho for a development training session facilitated by Bob Liming, a Lewiston non-profit executive. Board Members were pleased with results of this session and look forward to implementing many of the ideas generated, such as those listed on Page 7.

At a brief business meeting on October 1, the Board adopted several proposed changes to our Bylaws. The changes provide some needed updates and will improve our governance by clarifying roles and providing more continuity. A new Officer position, a Second Vice-President, is defined and the Officer terms are increased from one to two years. Board Member terms are increased from one to three years, and terms will overlap so that only one-third of the Board is elected each year. Language is also added recognizing the position of Executive Director and specifically allowing regular mail or email elections. The proposed Bylaw Amendments will be presented to the membership for vote in the near future. It is expected that the vote on the changes will be completed by January 15, 2006.

We look forward to a great year. Our proposal for a grant to do an interpretive installation on the Tamkalits grounds in Wallowa has been accepted by the Oregon Trail Community Foundation. Vice-President Dick Seymour and Joe McCormack will be leading this \$10,500 project. Stay tuned for more on this project!

Some dates to look forward to include the Partnership for the NTS lobbying session in Washington D. C. on February 14-17. We'll have to reschedule our Winter Board meeting, since it conflicts with the PNTS event. Early March in either Nespelem, WA or Lapwai, ID are being considered. We'll finalize that soon, so plans can be made to attend.

Also, be aware that PNTS may schedule a

meeting of the National Historic Trail organizations in Kansas City on May 5-6.

In October, the Foundation joined the Lewis and Clark Heritage Foundation in conducting a well-received program on the Culture and Economics of Trails at the Business Center in Salmon, Idaho. A report on this meeting will be coming later. If you would like a similar program for your area let me know and we can organize one. Programs such as this help build interest on a local level and could lead to creation of local NPTF chapters.

As you can see, we have an ambitious agenda for 2006. Your help is needed to make it happen. We need more members!! Currently, we have 110 on the roll. If each one of us recruits one new member, we double that number!

Lilóoy 'ískit (Happy Trails)

Jim Evans



?skitpe is a Nez Perce word that translates to "on the trail, path or road." This newsletter is published on a quarterly basis and serves the members of the Nez Perce Trail Foundation.

Submission: All readers are encouraged to submit material, stories, photos, and ideas that relate to the Nez Perce Trail for publication consideration. All submissions are subject to editing for grammar, clarity, length, and the editor reserves the right to reject any submission. Submissions may be made via E-mail, on a 3.5" disk, or on paper. Submissions must be made by the following dates:

Spring: May 31 Summer: August 31

Fall: November 31 Winter: January 31

Subscriptions: Subscriptions are free to members of the Nez Perce Trail Foundation. A one-year subscription for non-members is \$10 to cover the costs of printing and postage. For more information, call Jim Evans at 208.940 0053 or email executivedirector@nezpercetrail.net.

JACKSON SUNDOWN



The horse became a very important part of the Nez Perce people. Not only for hunting in buffalo country, but the horse was a warrior. Nez Perce learned to breed and work with horses. Waaya-Tonah-Toesits-Kahn (Jackson Sundown) from an early age worked and cared for horses. Waaya-Tonah-Toesits-Kahn was a famous all-around cowboy, horseman, and excellent rider and breeder of horses.

The Nez Perce War of 1877 began and Waaya-Tonah-Toesits-Kahn was 14 years old. Waaya-Tonah-Toesits-Kahn and Sam Tilden (Suhm-Keen) both were assigned to attend to the horses in the evening and herd the horses while the tribe decamped. After the Nez Perce war ended Waaya-Tonah-Toesits-Kahn retreated to Canada with a small band of cold, hungry and injured Nez Perce. It is believed that Waaya-Tonah-Toesits-Kahn stayed with the Sioux (Sitting Bull's camp in Canada) about two years, then crossed the border into Washington. He then went into Montana, married and had two daughters.

Waaya-Tonah-Toesits-Kahn became known as Jackson Sundown and developed a well known reputation as a skilled horseman.

In 1910, Jackson Sundown moved back to Idaho. And in 1912 he married Cecelia Wapshela, and they lived on her ranch located at Jacques Spur, six miles east of Lapwai.

Sundown became a well known all-around rodeo rider. Jackson Sundown was going to rodeos all over the northwest. In 1912 it is recorded that Jackson Sundown (at the age of 49) entered rodeo events in Canada and Idaho (Culdesac, Orofino, Kamiah and Grangeville). Sundown became a favorite at these rodeos because he was tall, lean and handsome, he wore his hair in braids tied under his chin, and he always wore bright colored shirts.

In 1914, Sundown was having much success as an all-around rodeo rider. Other contestants pulled out of rodeos because Sundown was riding and they knew he would win. As a result the rodeo managers decided to hire Sundown to exhibition ride for \$50.00 a day to entertain the crowds.

In 1915, Sundown (at age 52) went to Pendleton Oregon and placed third. Sundown decided to retire from rodeo after the Pendleton Roundup. In 1916 a sculptor, Alexander Phimister Proctor (who was sculpting Sundown at the time), persuaded Sundown to enter the 1916 Roundup in Pendleton, Oregon and paid his entrance fee. Sundown made it to the saddle bronc semi-final round and then rode "Casey Jones" to move into the finals. As Sundown eased onto Angel's back for his final ride, the blindfold was removed from Angel. Angel tried to whirl and leap to throw Sundown off. All Sundown's years as a child in the Wallowa's riding, and his career in Montana as a horseman, and his rodeo experience showed that day. It is said that Sundown became one with the horse. As Angel tried one last attempt at throwing Sundown off, Sundown fanned his hat at the horse. And then the signal of the end of the ride. Jackson Sundown, was the 1916 World Champion Bronc Rider.

In 1923, Jackson Sundown died of pneumonia, he was buried at Slickpoo Mission Cemetery near Jacques Spur. Later a stone monument was placed there to remember the Nez Perce warrior and horseman .

NEZ PERCE NATIONAL HISTORIC TRAIL SITE CERTIFICATION PROJECT

On November 4, 2005, dozens of people gathered at Quapaw, Oklahoma, and Baxter Springs, Kansas, to acknowledge and participate in the site certification ceremonies for two interpretive panels commemorating the time during which the Nez Perce were held prisoner in these foreign locations so far from their beloved home. Note: This Project, started by the Nez Perce Foundation, was completed by McCormack Landscape Design. The following information was taken from the Nez Perce National Historical Trail web page . See that site for the complete program.



Our representative at the Program was Charlie Moses Jr. " Who told how this place was a turning point for the Nez Perce, how it marked the beginning of a long series of divisions among the people. When they were finally allowed to head back West, every adult was asked, "Do you want to move to Lapwai and become a Christian, or do you want to move to Nespelem and be who you are?" About half chose Lapwai and about half chose Nespelem. "This divided families," he said, "and it divided friends. It divided even brothers, who were split up in that way. Chief Joseph was the only one who was not asked his choice, and since those years a number of other divisive events and issues have often splintered the Nez Perce even further. "



Historian Larry O'Neal, Archivist at the Baxter Heritage Center, spoke of the Nez Perce during their time in this place, and what a painful time it was in the history of the people. He said that many of the wounds have yet to heal, that the Nez Perce people's bones are scattered across half the country. Larry's remarks follow below.

THE NEZ PERCE IN BAXTER SPRINGS, KANSAS.

The 21st day of July 1878 was a very typical summer day in Kansas, very hot and terribly humid, and in the west a billowing storm front was building, promising a forthcoming thunderstorm very soon. Several hundred local citizens had gathered that evening on the platform at the railroad station, awaiting the arrival of a special train from Ft. Leavenworth. Between 6-7 p.m. that evening the train arrived carrying the famous Chief Joseph and his people, the Nez Perce, or the Nimipuu, as they called themselves. These people had since the previous November been prisoners of war at Fort Leavenworth following their capture that autumn at the Bear Paw Battlefield in Montana.

It was the fate of the Nez Perce Indians that they had been released from military authorities at 4 a.m. that morning, boarded the train with all their possessions and suffered an excruciating trip of about 14 hours to Baxter Springs that day. Earlier in the day, they had been released from military authority and status as prisoners of war. They were released into the hands of civilian overseers, in this case the Quaker agent at the Quapaw Agency south of Baxter Springs. This was the end of the journey, and it was the "jumping off place" for all the tribes who would be relocated to the Quapaw Agency in Indian Territory.

Upon their arrival at the Baxter Station nearly 410 frightened and very tired and sick Nez Perces disembarked from the train witnessed by the curious stares of the many local onlookers. It was too late in the evening to continue into the Territory. Thus, the exhausted Nez Perces were forced to spend that evening camping the railroad freight yards.

The journey that day had been a horrific experience. The stifling heat had resulted in over half the people being prostrated by heat exhaustion to the point they required assistance to depart the train. Sadly three children succumbed to the conditions on the train. The freight yard became their camp for the night and the burial site for the unfortunate children. These were the first of a succession of deaths and rapid burials that would begin at once. The sad occasions plagued this tribe for the next few months of their stay in the neighboring Quapaw Agency. Within a matter of months, nearly one quarter of those who had arrived at the Baxter Station would succumb to any number of illnesses that even medicine could not cure.

The story of the Nez Perce flight and the period spent in exile is one of the most compelling sagas in American frontier history. It is a story of a people treated shabbily by the U. S. Government, forcing them to endure a long period of suffering, hardship, homesickness, and death. It is a story of a people who through a series of broken government promises suffered broken hearts and shattered dreams. It is a story of a people longing only to be free and to be treated as all mankind. It is a story of a people forced to endure the hardships and "needless neglect" of a corrupt and intolerably arrogant local Quaker agent, Hiram Jones, whose mission was ostensibly to civilize and Christianize his newly accepted savages from the Northwest. He called his methodology the "straightening out process."

As the Chief of the Nez Perce band, Joseph was the spokesman and advocate in restoring his people to their home so far away. From the moment of their arrival in Baxter Springs, Joseph labored tirelessly, despite so many odds, to educate the outside world of what tragedy was befalling his people stranded in the Indian Territory. Joseph was a frequent visitor to Baxter Springs during this time of exile. As chief he often spoke to newspaper reporters and the public in general about the treatment of his people, their suffering, and dying. He perfected his speeches to ever present audiences and with gifted talents of oratory captivated his audience whomever it might be. He used the telegraph at the station nearby to fire off innumerable communiqués to various Washington dignitaries begging for compassion and asking for freedom for his unfortunate band. It was from this station in Baxter Springs that Joseph and his trusty ally Yellow Bull and Interpreter A. I. Chapman departed in January 1879 for a monumental trip to Washington, D. C. There he lobbied the case for his people and their freedom; he spoke to dignitaries, Washington socialites, Congressmen, and even the Great Chief President Hayes. His campaign stirred the imagination of newspapers in the east and inquisitive groups such as religious organizations, and many Congressmen who embraced their plight. But freedom was far from coming any time soon.

The Nez Perce would remain in this area for a period of 10 months before they again unceremoniously were moved to another "permanent home" as they were always called. This time the move would take them to near present day Ponca City, Oklahoma. In April 1879 Joseph hand moved his people to a new location, unilaterally, on the west bank of Spring River just below the city of Baxter Springs. Realizing that their days at this camp were to be short, the Nez Perce made many treks into this border town. The trip could easily be made on foot either by following the river trail into town on the east or following the Military Road in from the south. The women used this opportunity to bring their highly coveted moccasins and gloves to town to trade for merchandise needed at the new home in the west. It was said by the merchants that the Nez Perce women were some of the shrewdest traders they had ever met. Bows and arrows were also eagerly sought by the townspeople. The warrior who so bravely crossed the rampaging waters of the Northwest on their ponies and so proudly had displayed their equestrian prowess, were forced to walk into town. They then were taught by local citizens how to pair up and drive teams of draft horses and mules pulling wagons. This skill was needed for they then would become drayers and teamsters to drive the animals on the trek to the west.

Joseph and his interpreter, Chapman, were seen almost daily on the Streets as the massive preparations were being made. Joseph even frequented the local Planter's Hotel, signing his name in the guestbook. Joseph remarked that he and his people had been well treated by the townspeople of Baxter Springs, but "he now had to follow the decisions of the Great Spirit," and the Nimipuu would be going on west to a new home. The first week of May, 1889 the caravan of wagons and human cargo left this region never to return, leaving nearly one fourth of their number behind in such a short time.

The internment of your ancestors in this area is a most significant aspect of our local history as it is to your tribal. Many questions remain and yet to be answered. But the designation of this extension of the Nez Perce Trail to include Ft. Leavenworth, Baxter Springs, the Quapaw Agency, and the Ponca experience should help to make all aware of this tragic episode that occurred nearby. This memorial will always serve as a reminder of this time to the descendants of this generation of Nez Perce and to the future generations of Baxter Springs residents who will become familiar with the Nez Perce and what happened them while they were here. This will be a permanent bond that will exist between the citizens of Baxter Springs and the Nez Perce people for all time.

(Continued from page 5)

Today, sadly, the bones of the Nez Perce lie buried and scattered across half the nation from Idaho in the West to as far east as Kansas and Oklahoma never to be located or repatriated to their beloved Northwest. With these monuments however, it is a certainty that their time here will not be forgotten. We too will remember. To you, my friends, who have come so far for this special occasion, I am truly honored to share this moment in time with you.



Nez Perce NHP Superintendent Announces Retirement

Doug Eury, Superintendent of Nez Perce National Historical Park, will retire on January 3, 2006 after 30 years of federal service. Twenty four of those years were with the National Park Service.

An Open House for Doug was held on December 16, 2005 at the Spalding Visitor Center of Nez Perce National Historical Park. Jim Evans, Paul Wapato and Ruth Wapato represented the NPTF at that event.

Doug and his wife Lynn will be moving to Tijeras, New Mexico (outside of Albuquerque). Doug is looking forward to doing more traveling, visiting their son Mark who is now a pilot based in Denver, getting back to woodworking, and plans to be involved in volunteering for a variety of activities in the community and at church.

Doug joined the National Park Service in 1981 after two years with the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service (HCRS) and acquiring a Ph.D. in Park and Recreation Administration from the University of New Mexico.

His first NPS assignment was at the Southwest Regional Office in Santa Fe, followed by stints as superintendent at El Morro National Monument , El Malpais National Monument , and Petroglyph National Monument, all in New Mexico. He also served in an extended detail as a legislative intern in Washington, D.C. Earlier he also completed four years of active duty as an officer in the U.S. Air Force.

Doug has been the Superintendent at Nez Perce National Historical Park since 1998. "Meeting the needs of a park that is so spread out has allowed me to work with a great variety of partners and communities. This made the job very challenging, but also very rewarding," Eury states.

All of us at the Nez Perce Trail Foundation wish Doug the best in his retirement. Doug has been a great friend of the Foundation and we all have enjoyed working with him and are very thankful for his support.

For information on the Nez Perce National Historical Park [www.nps.gov.nepe](http://www.nps.gov/nepe)

A Look Back at Foundation History

A search through the foundation archives produced the following time-line for our history:

July 19, 1991 **Nez Perce National Historic Trail Foundation is formed.**

July 19, 1991 **First Meeting of the Board of Directors**, Holiday Inn Parkside, Missoula, Montana. Foundation Bylaws drafted by Merle Wells were adopted unanimously.

First officers elected: Harry Fritz, President; Richard L. Adams, Vice President; Sandi McFarland, Secretary; Leroy Anderson, Treasurer; Cheryl Wilfong, Editor.

May 15, 1992 **1992 Meeting of the Board of Directors**, Kamiah Ranger Station, Kamiah, Idaho.

The following committees were formed: Executive, Finance, Membership, Education. The president was give authority to appoint Ad Hoc committees.

October 1993 **First Newsletter**, James M. Dolan, Executive Director.

November 20, 1993 **1993 Meeting of the Board of Directors**, Missoula Public Library, Missoula, Mt. **1994 Meeting of the Board of Directors**,

March 1995 **Progress Report**, Michael R. Beckes, NPNHT Coordinator, USDA Forest Service.

October 16-19, 1995 **First Annual Symposium**, Sandi McFarland, General Chair.

October 18, 1995 **1995 Annual Meeting of the Board of Directors**, Ramada Inn, Lewiston, Idaho.

Officers Elected: Steve Russell, President; Charlie Moses Jr., Vice President; Sandi McFarland, Secretary; Dan Gard, Treasurer.



BOARD TRAINING

Brief Summary of Goals developed by Board at meeting; Revision of By-Laws; Financial Planning; NPNHT Management plan; Increase Native American membership; Projects—Wallowa, Birch Creek, Nespelem; Continue Board Development / reorganization; Horse/foot trail development; Certification of entire trail ; Chapter development

Is Your Membership Current?

The Nez Perce Trail Foundation relies on membership fees to provide many valuable services to our members. With your continued financial support, the Nez Perce Trail Foundation is able to continue serving the community as an advocate for the Nez Perce National Historical Trail. Please take a few moments to check the status of your membership. To verify your membership expiration date, please email Jim Evans at executive director@nezperctrail.net. To update your membership dues, send a check to Nez Perce Trail Foundation; 194 Highway 28 Salmon, ID 83467.

Annual Dues:

Individual: \$30 Senior \$15 Family: \$50

Non Profit/Gov/Sponsor \$100 Corporate: \$500

OFFICERS NEZ PERCE TRAIL FOUNDATION 2005-06

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WEB SITES

Nez Perce Trail

Foundation

www.nezperctrail.net

Nez Perce National

Historical Trail

www.fs.us.gov/npnht

Nez Perce National

Historical Park

www.nps.gov/ncpe

Sacajawea Center

www.sacajaweacenter.org

Nez Perce Tribe

www.nezperce.org

Wallowa Band Interpretive Center

www.wallowamezperce.com

Confederate Tribes of the Umatilla Indian reservation

www.umatilla.nsn.us

See our web site for more