



OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF
THE YELLOWSTONE TRAIL ASSOCIATION

"A Good Road from Plymouth Rock to Puget Sound"



DISCOVERING THE TRAIL

When we moved to Waconia from suburban Minneapolis, we thought it would be nice to buy acreage and live in the country with a few horses. Instead, we settled on a nice development in town and built a home and enjoyed Lake Waconia, just a block away.

Then a builder, working across the street, struck up a conversation with my husband, Brian. He was about to start a home for a client, a doctor who

had planned to build in the country, but had changed his mind. Did we know of anyone who might want to buy 10 acres, on a small lake, just west of town? It seemed too good to be true...10 acres, 275 feet of lakeshore, and a creek running through it - at a price we could afford. A couple of weeks later, we held a contract for the land.

Dr. Ralph Molnau, the local vet from whom we bought the property, shares the history of the area in bits and pieces. Although Dr. Ralph is in his seventies, he is always in a hurry - rushing from farm to farm tending to the animals. So every conversation comes in bits and pieces, like little jewels of history, mixed with useful farm instruction. He told us of a devastating tornado that hit the area in 1965, leaving board-skewered cattle in its wake. Farm machinery was found miles from its origin. Many buildings in the area were destroyed, but two old farmhouses and a barn remain nearby.

There's a bridge over the creek that will be our driveway. Its five-foot culvert is very old, but still sound. Erosion was taking its toll, so Brian set to work building boulder retaining walls. Late last fall, the bridge looked wonderful, and won approval of the cement contractor. Construction vehicles could safely make it over the bridge so that we could build a home. On the Minnesota Historical Society web site, Brian found a photo of our bridge. Up in the corner of one picture stood a house, just where we plan to build one. The caption read, "Yellowstone Trail, near Hydes Lake". Yellowstone Trail? We hadn't known it existed even though we'd made a trek to Yellowstone Park ourselves three years previous. So we went to our historian, Dr. Ralph, who explained that the old roadbed which ran through our property, was once, indeed, the Yellowstone Trail. Brian shared with him another old photo showing a railroad track elevated high into the air. This had been built up and made into Highway 5 along the South side of our property. The creek ran through the photo, curving just as it does today.



While excavating near the bridge, Brian dug up an area full of small glass bottles. This provided several days' entertainment, an "archeological dig" for

IT'S TIME TO RE-UP FOR 2005

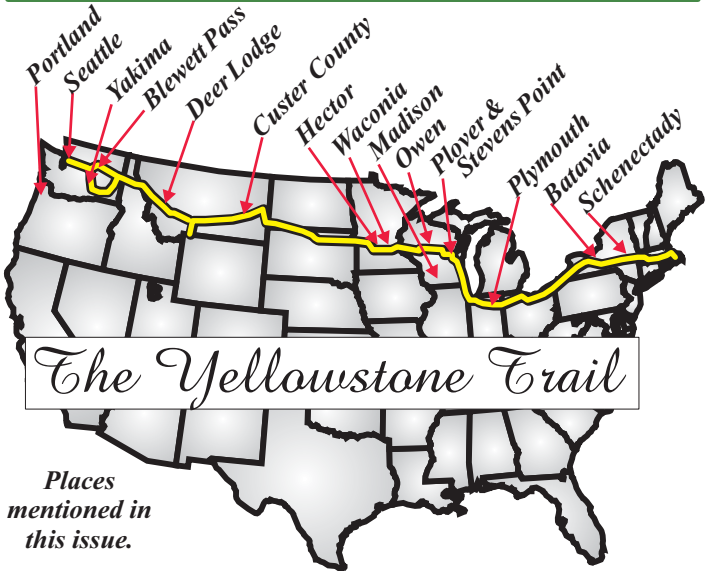
The end of 2004 is nearly here; we need to hear from you. Please support the Yellowstone Trail Association by paying your 2005 dues to support the activities of this fledgling non-profit group. Receive each edition of *The Arrow* and know that the memory of this historic highway will not be lost. We remain steadfast in our mission to research, educate about and popularize the YT.

Dues for our first year, 2004, just covered the cost of preparing, printing and mailing *The Arrow* to members and potential members. All other activities were supported by volunteers. SO, not only do we need your membership, we need many more new members to support pro-active events. Can you find two other people to join? Or can you find a business to support your highway by joining at the Corporate Level? We'll happily acknowledge their support in *The Arrow* and on the web site.

In order to keep the *Arrow* in print and to print hundreds of copies of an informative brochure we need to increase the membership fee. The dues for the 2005 calendar year (Jan. 1 through Dec. 31, 2005) will be:
Regular (Individual/Small Business/nonprofits, etc) \$15*
Tourism Promotion Agency (C. of C., CVB) \$50*
Corporate \$100*

* If you already have renewed for 2005, the 2004 rate was accepted because the new rate had not yet been published. New York residents add \$5 for local activities.

Please renew right now and then tomorrow motivate other interested folks to join so we can do the things planned for 2005. (Also see the short articles about the plans for 2005 and the report of what was done 2004.)



Places mentioned in this issue.

our daughters and 8-year old neighbor, Maddie. One day while working alone in the shaded creek bed, Brian imagined the people who had passed by. Where were they headed? Did they stop in this shade for a rest? Did anyone take shelter from the tornado in this very culvert? Could there be ghosts still here? And suddenly, little Maddie gave him a big hug from behind!

As we begin our life on a small piece of the Yellowstone Trail, we look forward to researching its history and helping keep old memories alive, as we create new ones for our family.

--TRAILERS--

NEWS AND NOTES FROM THE TRAIL

● GOOD SAM PRESENTATION

Some 130 Good Sam Members (national RV club) attended a presentation about the Yellowstone Trail, hosted by John O'Donnell and Dick Bauman, Trailmen from Deer Lodge, Montana, at the Old Prison Museums on Friday, September 18. The photographic essay, customized for the Deer Lodge and Montana area by John and Alice Ridge, caught the imagination of attendees to the Montana Samboree. Good Sam plans are in the works for a Summer 2005 trip over the YT through Montana's Continental Divide crossing from Deer Lodge to Livingston. ☺

● IN THE NEWS IN MONTANA

The Lee Newspapers of Montana distribute seasonal editions of *Rediscover Montana*, *Big Sky Vacation Treasures*, an advertising-based promotion of Montana events and tourism. The first article in the Fall

Yellowstone Trail Offers Road to the Past



2004/2005 edition was "Yellowstone Trail Offers Road to the Past." It was written by Dana Pulis, an independent writer who had been in correspondence with the Yellowstone Trail Association. Her story of the history of the Trail and her encouragement of heritage tourism along the Trail will help readers rediscover the Yellowstone

Trail. The entire article can be read at www.rediscovermt.com, then click on Custer County, then on Yellowstone Trail. ☺

● IN THE NEWS IN NEW YORK

WNYT-TV, Channel 13 of Albany, New York, ran a short, but very well done program about the Yellowstone Trail. The program was the result of efforts by Trailman Rich Rheingold of Schenectady, New York. He provided the information about the history of the Trail and was interviewed on-screen. The narrator was seen driving the Trail through the Albany area while discussing the Trail's history. Rich provides a good model for the rest of us members! Rich runs the US Route 20 Internet discussion group which has expanded to support the Yellowstone Trail in the area where the Trail and old US 20 ran on the same road or at least relatively near each other. To learn more, visit <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/USRoute20>. ☺

● IN THE NEWS IN MINNESOTA

Once again our Trailman, Johnnie Hill of Hill's Unique Gifts in Hector, Minnesota, saw to it that the Yellowstone Trail received notice in his area. In addition to his ad and article about the Yellowstone Trail in the regional *Small Town Shopper*, he has produced post cards promoting the Yellowstone Trail along with his city. This is just the kind of name association we need to promote the rediscovery of the Trail. Johnnie sends his holiday greetings. ☺



● HISTORY PUBLICATION HIGHLIGHTS THE YT

A handsome book discussing the 100 most important events in Wisconsin history has just been published by the Wisconsin Historical Society Press. And the YT is one of them! The book is intended for middle school and older students as a resource for historical research. There are questions raised with each topic which demand research, critical thinking and judgements. The No Child Left Behind program gives critical thinking short shrift. In response, the authors say that "...by identifying and strengthening skills and habits of mind that carry over from one content area to another" historical research can "bridge this concern." ☺

● PRESERVING HISTORY ON THE YELLOWSTONE TRAIL

The old high school of Owen, Wisconsin, was built in the center of town in 1921, right on the Yellowstone Trail. A large gym was added in 1953. The year 2005 will mark the 10th year since a small group of concerned people

joined together as Friends of the Old School to begin work to preserve and restore it for community use. The Friends of the Old School worked diligently on the gym and now are focusing on the older part. They engaged the help of Historic Preservation consultant, Pat Lacey, of Neillsville, early this year, and were delighted to hear in April that the whole project was



approved for listing on the Wisconsin Register of Historic Places. Finally, someone 'out there' had recognized all the hard work and research that went into the endeavor. An added bonus came this August when word was received that the Old School is now listed on the National Register. And a Yellowstone Trail sign is prominently displayed in front. *Information submitted by Esther Niedzwicki of Owen.* ☺

● BUICK ROAD TRIP

During the summer of 2003, Gary Cummings drove his 1931 Buick from his home in Seattle, Washington, to Flint, Michigan, to take part in the Buick Centennial Celebration. He was part of a 50-car caravan for the 2300 mile trip. Quite an undertaking. Not until this year did Gary realize that a good part of the trip was on the Yellowstone Trail.

Now the North Cascade Chapter of the Buick Club of America is thinking about traveling the Trail the summer of 2005 to attend the July 6-10 Buick Club of America National Meet in Batavia, New York, another city on the Yellowstone Trail. Gene Lander, Buick31grl@juno.com, is working on the plans.

The Yellowstone Trail Association is providing Trail information and maps for the travelers and would like to find YTA members and convention and visitors' bureaus along the route who would like to facilitate accommodations and perhaps mini-car shows and programs during the evening's stay.

Many other attendees could follow the Yellowstone Trail from east and west to Batavia. The potential exists for interesting plans in many cities across the country. Readers: Let us know of your ideas to make a trip in an antique Buick more interesting and historic while at the same time "rediscovering" the Yellowstone Trail.

Visit www.buickclub.org for info about the Buick club and the national meet. ☺

● DEER LODGE, MONTANA, PRINTS

Trailman John O'Donnell says that "the renowned Montana artist Don Greytak is working on several sketches of period automobile travel along the YT in the Deer Lodge [MT] area. A limited edition of numbered prints is in the offing to raise funds to preserve and move one of the few remaining original YT bridges built in 1913 to cross the Clark Fork of the Columbia River north of Deer Lodge. The Powell County Museum & Arts Foundation, parent company of the Old Prison Museums, has adopted the bridge, which was scheduled for replacement and demolition in 2005. Plans would relocate the historic bridge to a site near the Old Territorial Prison, where it will serve to pass pedestrian traffic across the Clark Fork River, while preserving the story of the YT."

Anyone interested in sketches of period automobile travel may email John O'Donnell at johnthurn5@peoplepc.com. ☺

PRESERVING THE HISTORIC ROAD IN AMERICA CONFERENCE

The Yellowstone Trail was represented at the April 22-25, 2004 conference entitled Preserving the Historic Road in America. Historical preservation advocates, highway engineers, byway representatives, and transportation history buffs met in Portland, Oregon, to learn from one another and experts in several areas. The meeting is held biennially and is sponsored by the Federal Highway Administration, various state departments of highways, and the National Trust for Historic Preservation.



This year's meeting was highlighted by a presentation by William Least Heat-Moon. In this period of political turmoil we were reminded that by neglecting our history we lose our connections and that by connecting we begin to belong, and can begin to

create a vision for both a great future for mankind and for a local project to make a few lives better.

Tours and discussions about the Historic Columbia River Highway, a model of highway preservation just east of Portland, made real the topics of the meeting.

Yellowstone Trail advocates might enjoy visiting <http://www.historicroads.org/> to gain a perspective for our work and interest in the YT. One quote from that site:

"The benefits of preserving and managing a historic road are significant and diverse. They may include opportunities for heritage tourism and economic development, improved safety and efficiency, restoration of historic structures and features, and simply the civic pride associated with a better and more comprehensive understanding of a community's transportation heritage.

"Increasingly, communities across the United States and beyond are beginning to recognize that their roads are historic. Historic freeways, transcontinental highways, parkways, farm-to-market roads and traffic circles are being studied, inventoried, debated and discussed in the newest movement in the historic preservation world."

Your representative at the meeting, John Ridge, successfully informed many attendees about the YT and the Yellowstone Trail Association. ☺

In the last issue of *The Arrow* we reported on the Scenic Byway Program being instituted in Wisconsin. Twelve of the 13 states through which the Yellowstone Trail runs already have a Scenic Byway Program. Massachusetts does not. We reported that a major problem with the proposed program in Wisconsin was that it allowed only "scenic" roads to



OJ Thompto of Madison, Wis.

apply to be so named. On the national level, five other qualities, including "historic," are allowed for national grants. The Yellowstone Trail is historic, not particularly scenic in Wisconsin. The Trail could not even be nominated for state inclusion, much less be further nominated for national recognition. The appearance of Trailman O.J. Thompto and John and Alice Ridge and the Wisconsin Secretary of Tourism did not change the opinion of the Department of Transportation and the program, containing only "scenic" words, went forward to the legislative committees for a hearing October 6. Once again, John, Alice and O.J. spoke, but this time we had help from the state association of

Convention and Visitors Bureaus. We also bombarded the legislators with letters and e-mails, asking them to reject the plan as written and include the "historic" intrinsic quality. O.J. pounded on legislators' doors.

The legislators heard our plea, asked the DOT to include "history" along with "scenic." However, it appears that the legislators did not quite understand the meaning of an *historic road*, and asked the DOT to include "historic" roads as "roads that connect *places* that are on registers of historic places." We hit the e-mails again, stating that that definition would allow an Interstate to be called an historic road. There will be no more hearings, but the legislators will take a final look, and we hope will heed our plea *again*.

Much of this was done around election time when legislators were out campaigning. Sad to say that the co-chair of the legislative committee was receptive to us, but he didn't get re-elected. Let us hope that this issue is settled to our benefit before January!

Half a loaf is better than none and the Yellowstone Trail does pass through enough towns that have sites on the National Register, so we may be able to do some Gerrymandering, but it is/was a tough battle trying to get people to see that the *road itself is historic*. Keep tuned. ☺

2004 ACTIVITIES

We think that our activities in 2004 carried out our mission:

- We prepared three Arrows, one of which (#5) was printed to use as a brochure for advertising the Association. *The Arrow* and mailings to prospective members is what your membership pays for. Feel free to suggest articles/topics, changes, or corrections.

Volunteers have done many things at no cost to the membership during 2004:

- Individuals and groups regularly seek the YTA's advice in finding the Trail in their area. We answer all of our e-mail requests for help or information - about 300 of them! The YTA is currently advising the Marshall County Museum in Plymouth, Indiana, as they mount a permanent Transportation History display featuring the YT and other roads which meet in Plymouth.

- We are forging effective partnerships with a spectrum of constituencies. We had representation at the Historic Roads Conference (see above). The tourism business is finding us. The Wisconsin Convention & Visitors Bureaus, the Secretary of Tourism and the Advertising Council joined the YT members in fighting to have the Scenic Byways Program in that state include "historic" roads. (see story above). Members of the YTA write a column for *The American Road* quarterly magazine. Six or seven newspapers have carried articles about the Trail this year. We are coordinating with the LeMay Museum in

Tacoma, WA for their proposed 2006 or 2007 cross-country sociability run. The YTA will be assisting the North Cascade Buick Owners Club as they plan a 2005 run to New York. (see story p. 2).

- Trailmen John O'Donnell (MT), Lance Sorenson (MN), Nels Monson (WI), Rich Rheingold (NY) and your officers have made presentations about the Trail this year.

- We have maintained and extended our web site. Check it out www.yellowstonetrail.org. As we undertake important new features, more help will be needed. See the article about the planned SHARE inventory (p.4).

- Issue # 5 of *The Arrow* was the last edition sent to non-members. Non-members will have to go to the web site to read past issues. Our contacts with potential members will be limited to letters and e-mails, and a new brochure as soon as it can be afforded.

We're peddling hard. You can be a big help by paying your 2005 dues today, getting others to join, and by getting out the word about the YT. ☺



Happy Holidays

Yellowstone Trail Association

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



Notice of membership dues for 2005.

Membership campaign. Each member find two new members!

Share! Help build the YT inventory.

- 2005 - THE BIG PUZZLE AND AN OPPORTUNITY

There are many pieces yet to be found to put together the 3500 mile long puzzle of the Yellowstone Trail. That fact leads us to our goals for 2005:

- 1.) During 2005 we will do our best to send at least three issues of *The Arrow* to you.
- 2.) If our membership increases enough and if gifts are sufficient we will prepare and print an informative brochure and membership application for use by us all to attract new members and inform others about the Association and the Trail.
- 3.) Through the efforts of Tom Barrett, YTA treasurer, we will expand our effort to work with antique auto clubs and convention and visitors' bureaus (CVBs) to conduct Sociability Runs along the Trail. This effort should attract working relationships with CVBs and increase our membership. But the primary purpose is to promote the rediscovery of the Yellowstone Trail. Sociability Runs may be local events that you arrange (talk to Tom!) or major cross-country events such as the Buick Owners run (see page 2).

THE NATIONAL 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* was sent to members of the Yellowstone Trail Association. These members had paid dues to the Association to support its efforts to improve the highway and attract tourists to services along the route.

The Arrow is published sporadically as time and resources permit. Only members of the Yellowstone Trail Association are receiving it in printed format. Older copies of *The Arrow* will be available at www.yellowstonetrail.org soon.

Questions, stories and news items about the historic Trail and current related activities may be directed to:

The Yellowstone Trail Association, John or Alice Ridge, 7000 South Shore Drive, Altoona, WI, 54720, **Phone** 715-834-5992
E-mail: jridge@yellowstonetrail.org
Web site response: www.yellowstonetrail.org using the Response Form.

Questions or suggestions about the Yellowstone Trail Association, Inc. or about opportunities for Tourism agencies may be directed to:

The Yellowstone Trail Association, Tom Barrett, 340 Division Street North, Stevens Point, WI 54481. **Phone:** 715-344-2556 or 800-236-4636 ext. 16

E-mail: tbarrett@spacvb.com

4.) Through the efforts of Alice and John Ridge we will continue the work to research the history of the Trail and current opportunities to enjoy it. But most of that information must come from you. Therefore, we'll try a new project: Share.

To explain Share, consider the note from member Ray Alkofer of Yakima, Washington: "How about a place where members of the YT organization (or anyone else for that matter) can make entries about sections of the old trail that they have recently visited or traveled? Today I drove the old route over Blewett Pass in Washington using the paved but narrow US Forest Service road. Both ends connect back to US 97 on either side of the Swauk Pass grade. Lots of switchbacks, marvelous scenery, and best of all, a pleasant drive. The Forest Service maintains the 11-mile route, but it is usually not navigable during the long winter season. The elevation at the summit is 4061 ft."

Consider also the article "Discovering the Trail" on page one of this *Arrow*. Members Leslie and Brian Jensen discovered an original section of the Trail in Minnesota and corrected our map of the area.

How do we share those important bits of information? We might try an Internet discussion group eventually, but to start with we will try Share, a process in which you and we can share our bits of knowledge about the Trail, its history, and its present features. Is there a building standing now that was there when the Trail existed? Does the Trail go past your house? Family tale about the Trail? Pictures?

Step 1. Find and use the Share form or e-mail us at jridge@yellowstonetrail.org or just drop us a line, 7000 South Shore Drive, Altoona, WI 54720, or call the Ridges (715-834-5992).

Step 2. Member volunteers will build a "YT Inventory" or "YT database" from the information you send. The Inventory will be posted in geographic order, state-by-state, on pages in the Association web site, www.yellowstonetrail.org. It will be accessible to all 24 hours a day.

Step 3. Read the material by visiting the web site and finding the area of interest to you. If you do not have Internet access, drop us a request and we will attempt to print out, and mail to you, the geographic section relevant to your interest.

Send us your pieces of the puzzle. Let's put this puzzle together . . . together. ☺

When you travel in the area near the corporate office of the Yellowstone Trail Association in Plover near Stevens Point, Wisconsin, plan to stay at the AmericInn Motel, a corporate member of the Association. A really nice place with good service. And a big yellow boulder to identify the Trail. ☺

