



Official Publication of The Yellowstone Trail Association  
*"A Good Road from Plymouth Rock to Puget Sound"*



## Trail-O-Grams

By Alice Ridge and contributing members

**\*Association News** – All past issues of the **Arrow** newsletter are now available on our website for your reading pleasure...starting with Issue #1 in February 2002. <http://www.yellowstonetrail.org/page152.html>  
 An index is also available at <http://www.yellowstonetrail.org/Arrows/ArrowIndex08.pdf>



**\*Hamlet, Indiana** is emerging as quite the Trail booster. Juanita Ketcham seems to be the heartbeat. Three events marked their calendars this past summer. June 17<sup>th</sup> they held **Trail Days**, featuring a cruise on the Trail into three counties. A popular event was the Manifold Cooking Contest wherein participants wrapped food in aluminum foil, revved up their engines and turned them into cooking surfaces. That evening a group called the Comedy Deli appeared at the American Legion for the benefit of the Yellowstone Trail Fest, coming in August.

Then in July new Yellowstone Trail road signs went up, courtesy of Nipsco's Improvement Grant.

Their annual **Yellowstone Trail Fest** occupied August 19-20 this year which looked like as much fun as the June 10<sup>th</sup> event. Repurposing metal parts from automobiles to sculpture drew triple the contestants over last year, and the Indiana Historical Society's *History on Wheels* interactive automotive display was also a big hit. Food, fun, music, beautiful weather and the Yellowstone Trail booth!

**\*Bill Dirnberger**, energetic leader of the **Minnesota Region of the Antique Automobile Club of America (AACCA)**, reported on the old car run on the Yellowstone Trail this summer. The run across a large part of **Southern Minnesota** included views of Michael Dowling's automobile business in **Olivia**; Dowling was president of the YTA in 1917. Dowling was also unique as he was a businessman, journalist, YT trailblazer, etc., all with no legs and no left arm. Another stop, the Andrew Volstead home in **Granite Falls** is now a museum. The Volstead Act created the great failed experiment of Prohibition (1919-1933), but he also created successful agricultural co-operative legislation. A World War II Museum and the historic Swensson farm rounded out the day - all on the Trail.

**\*Hudson, Wisconsin**'s annual Yellowstone Trail Heritage Day event was in June with family friendly fun for all. Dick's Bar (over 100 years on the Trail) hosted a meet and greet at 9a.m. Then it was off to geo-cache on the Trail in Hudson Parks. Repeat activities from past years included the Vintage Vehicles and Classic Car Show, the pie and ice cream social, the Octagon House Museum tours and the drive along the 1915 route of the Trail. New was the non-profit community fair.



Hettinger, SD's Prairie Thunder

**\*The Dickinson, (North Dakota) Press** had a nice piece on August 27<sup>th</sup> about the **Hettinger Dakota Buttes Museum** and the Yellowstone Trail, exhorting readers to stop by to see the 22,000 items therein, especially their Buffalo Heritage Project. In addition to the 2,000 lb bull buffalo named **Prairie Thunder**, the Yellowstone Trail was recognized as an important part of the history of Hettinger.

Congratulations go to our friends at the museum!

Continued

### More Trail-O-Grams:


\*Unsie Zuege, a reporter for the **Chanhassen (Minnesota) Villager**, wrote a fine summary of the Trail through Waconia, including a picture of the old Trail which we had not seen before. Wendy Biorn, Carver County Historical Society Executive Director, points to a faint imprint of the Trail (right). According to our maps, it is exactly where it should be, but we had not actually seen it. The Association is thankful for this additional piece of information.



Wendy Biorn and old route of YT

\***The Yellowstone County Historical Society in Billings, Montana**, purchased 20 YT road signs in 2016. After jumping through many hoops to get the signs actually put up, member Carol Bernhardt, reports that some have now been installed! Patience is needed when dealing with public works personnel.



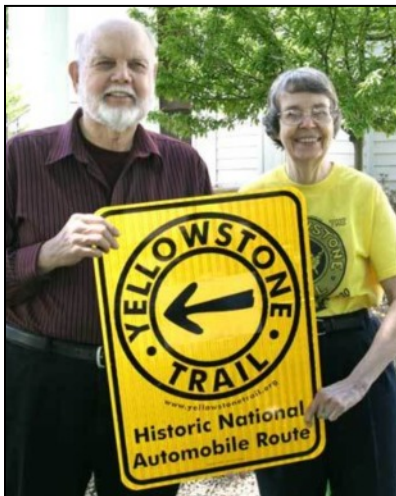
 \* Join us on Facebook! We update our latest news and we welcome comments. Just use this link: [facebook.com/Yellowstone Trail](https://facebook.com/Yellowstone Trail).

\***Our Trail in the news media:** WQOW-TV, Eau Claire, Wisconsin, featured “**Art Along the Yellowstone Trail**”; Dickenson Press, North Dakota, gave praise for the **Hettinger Dakota Buttes Museum**; Williston Daily, North Dakota, featured “**Hiking on the Yellowstone Trail and Mullan Road.**”

We can only report those Trail activities about which we hear. If your community has hosted an event, please let us know at [info@yellowstonetrail.org](mailto:info@yellowstonetrail.org). Ψ

## The Ridges go West Again!

by Alice Ridge, Arrow Editor Emerita



Alice & John Ridge - YTA staff photo

This past summer we went west from our home in Wisconsin with one purpose in mind - to confirm our maps of the Yellowstone Trail and to confirm the present existence of 100-year-old sites for Trail travelers to see. We are preparing a mile-by-mile book of maps, sites to see and history bits about the 3600 miles of the Trail “from Plymouth Rock to Puget Sound” for publication next year.

Local road numbers change, buildings are torn down, land profiles change. Because accuracy is a necessity, so was another trip with boots on the ground.

For 21 years we have researched the Trail using four cars, one RV and three trailers, all toting computers, scanners, printers, a dash camera, GPS, weather radio and an electric coffee warmer. We moved from an early cell phone in a bag to a very smart smartphone - neither of which worked in most of eastern Montana. Today, things are wireless, smartphones are fantastic, Google Streets and satellite views provide marvelous information and old newspapers are online making research much easier, just as we end ours. Slogging through local libraries’ microfilm and antique stores’ picture post card collections is a thing of the past. Young researchers today are really lucky, and their work can be far more complete.

As one might expect, unless century-old buildings are maintained, they will disappear, and some did. Some surprises awaited us and we had the good fortune to chat with old Trail friends and to meet new ones, but missed some as we had to press on.

In Montana we visited with Greg Childs of Laurel, Art Hatvelt of Billings, Paul Shea of Livingston, Bob Evans of Bozeman, and John O’Donnell formerly of Deer Lodge. Seeing Dave Habura of Tumwater, Washington, again was a treat. He is on the Board of our Yellowstone Trail Association and is always full of progressive ideas. And we missed several friends – a real disappointment.

Continued



So what did we find that was new to us from previous trips? Many small tweaks to our maps now have to be made, some surprises awaited us and we added many new pictures to our monstrous collection.

1.) Granite Falls to Ortonville, Minnesota, and Big Stone City, South Dakota, are on the Minnesota River Valley Scenic Byway. It is a lovely drive, but the Scenic Byway title was news to us. Ortonville's Columbian Hotel is truly gone, taking with its demise much of the history of the town.

2.) After watching it slowly decay for two decades, we saw that the Waldorf Hotel in Andover, South Dakota, was finally gone and a nice green lawn covers the 100 years of history that once marked the spot. Did Yellowstone Trail travelers stay there? What stories are there to tell? We will never know.

3.) The small McLaughlin Heritage Center Museum, McLaughlin, on the Standing Rock Indian Reservation, South Dakota, is closed. Major McLaughlin's name and Sitting Bull will forever be entwined.

4.) Eight miles northwest of little Trail town Rhame, North Dakota, lie the remnants of Fort Dilts. On the open prairie in 1864 a small wagon train of gold-seekers and 50 cavalry were harassed by Lakota Indians. Outnumbered, the travelers drew their wagons into a circle and built a six-foot high sod wall around themselves to await rescue which came 16 days later.



Site of Fort Dilts, ND - 1864

5.) The Masonic Hall in Ismay, Montana, finally collapsed. There was some recent talk of major renovation, but Mother Nature beat them to the punch.

6.) Outside of Laurel, Montana, a concrete, squat road marker was found by Art Hatfelt and explored by Greg Childs. It bears faint yellow paint but could just mark the change of county and not the Trail. This requires further investigation.



? Marker - Laurel, MT

7.) New to us was the interior of Big Timber's Grand Hotel. We have photographed the outside several times, but finally having lunch there drew us to its lovely, wood-trim-everywhere interior. Enough stuffed animal heads graced the walls of the restaurant to please Teddy Roosevelt.



Rockslide near Livingston, MT

8.) A smallish rock slide closed off part of the Trail south of Livingston, Montana in Paradise Valley last year. It was enough to dissuade the powers that be from reopening the road, maybe never. One can still experience the Trail north of the slide, cross over to Hwy 89, and resume the Trail on the south side, but few will.

9.) New to us was the interior of the Pekin Restaurant, 100 plus years old, in Butte, Montana. The interior is divided into little curtained, private cubicles. And no, these were not built for prostitutes to ply their trade. 'Twas much fun.

10.) The last time we saw W. Richland, Washington, the plans for a Yellowstone Trail Park were mostly on paper. Now at the corner of Bombing Range Rd and hwy 224 a lovely small park and Community Vegetable Garden exists. Elevated trays of veggies were growing happily and resident "farmers" were hovering nearby. The best repurposing project we have seen for the Trail!



YT Park's Community Gardens in West Richland, WA

11.) Disappointment. We had always passed up seeing Palouse Falls State Park, northwest of YT town Dodge, Washington. We finally made time for the visit but were barred from the entrance due to a forest fire that very day! Gr-r-r.

We concluded that, no matter how often one travels the same path, new views, new friends, and new roads give us new perspectives on the Trail and a century-old way of life. Ψ

# One Couple's Adventures on the Yellowstone Trail - Part 1

By Bill von Tagen, Boise, ID - photos by author and YTA staff

On May 30, 2017 my wife, Linda, and I embarked on a cross country trip on the Lincoln Highway and the Yellowstone Trail. Driving across country has been something that we both have longed to do. In my case, it has been a lifelong dream and more recently, an obsession. Before the trip was over we had traveled 7700 miles, visited twenty-two states, and met dozens of people.



Bill & Linda von Tagen's Mustang and vintage pop-up camping trailer

Although we suffered a couple of setbacks and were unable to complete the trip with the same car that we began with, the trip still exceeded my greatest expectations. Most of the time we camped in a small tent trailer that we towed behind the car, although we also spent many nights in motels when we could not find a campsite or when the weather made camping impractical.

Until five years ago I had not even heard of the Yellowstone Trail. As I said, the genesis of this trip was a dream of driving across country on old two-lane roads. It was not our intent to make this trek on a couple of "named highways". My dream was simply to drive

across country after I retired. Linda and I knew only that we wanted to avoid a mind numbing trip on interstate highways and that we wanted to drive the so-called "blue highways" on our journey.

As I began to plot the trip I read an article about the Lincoln Highway Centennial. While I had heard about the Lincoln Highway I'm embarrassed to say that I knew nothing of its significance. I knew absolutely nothing about the Yellowstone Trail. As I began to research the Lincoln Highway I became intrigued with the thought of driving across country as close to the old road as I could. In researching the Lincoln, I came across references to the Yellowstone Trail. I found myself very much drawn to the colorful history of both of these roads and in particular to the personalities involved in the founding of these two great highways.

Initially, the Yellowstone Trail was chosen simply because I needed a way home. I did not wish to repeat the trip on the Lincoln Highway. As long as I was going to travel the Yellowstone Trail I decided I better know something about it. As I read about it, I became fascinated with the personalities of Joe Parmley and inspired by the life of Michael Dowling.

We had more trouble being faithful to the Yellowstone Trail than we had with the Lincoln. There has been a great deal more research done on the Lincoln, but for those who wish to explore the Yellowstone Trail the reward is well worth the effort. The reader will note a couple of times that we intentionally deviated from the Yellowstone Trail. Most of the time that I did this it was because of my dislike of big city traffic or to see a particular attraction.

I was faithful to keeping a journal of our adventures. A complete record can be found at: [www.afordonthelincoln.blogspot.com](http://www.afordonthelincoln.blogspot.com). There, the reader can also find a journal of the first half of this trip, the Lincoln Highway. It is my intention to complete this article in two or three installments.



Joe Parmley's Spare tire cover

This first installment will begin at Plymouth Rock and end in Chicago. The second installment will cover Wisconsin and Minnesota. It may also cover part of South Dakota. The third installment will take us through Montana and Yellowstone National Park. The final installment is not written. Next year I hope to travel the remainder of the Yellowstone Trail from Seattle to Yellowstone National Park. Continued



This is probably an appropriate juncture to discuss what our trip was and what it was not. Although I get excited about viewing sections of old pavement and original alignments, Linda and I viewed these old highways in much the same way that, I believe, the founders originally intended. That is, the highway was intended primarily to go somewhere, and to see things. In other words, our goal was to use the Lincoln Highway and the Yellowstone Trail as a way to see this great nation of ours. If I got to see or to walk upon, or to drive upon and original alignment, that was a bonus. However, I was looking upon the highway as a vehicle that would transport me into the heart of this country. Like John Steinbeck we went looking for America. The Lincoln Highway and the Yellowstone Trail were simply the means to that end.



Plymouth Rock Portico, Plymouth, MA

that this was the age of the "Good Roads Movement". The term "Good Road" was readily understood. In addition, it suited Joe Parmley and the other organizers of the Yellowstone Trail. They were sober, hard-working Midwesterners.

On July 2, we traveled to Plymouth Massachusetts to visit Plymouth Rock. Although my research prepared me for a little disappointment in terms of the size Plymouth Rock I was still surprised to see how small it is. I remember as a child watching a CBS show with my father called: "The Twentieth Century". The show was sponsored by Prudential Insurance Company, whose logo featured the Rock of Gibraltar. One night I remember asking my dad if that big rock was Plymouth Rock. My dad chuckled and told me that it was not. In my mind, Plymouth Rock had to be at least as grand as the Rock of Gibraltar. When I saw the first picture of Plymouth Rock I realized it was relatively small. When I saw it in person, I discovered that it is even smaller. Many people have larger landscaping stones in their gardens.



Plymouth Rock - YTA Staff photo

None of this diminishes the importance of Plymouth Rock in our nation's history. Plymouth is the oldest continuously occupied English-speaking settlement in America. The Mayflower Compact is one of the oldest of written constitutions. The Rock was exciting to see, but like Linda's first engagement ring, its size belied its significance.

We also hiked around the old town Plymouth and visited many of the historic sites. These included Jenny Gristmill, the statue of Massasoit, and Memorial to the Pilgrim Fathers that died that first terrible winter. We spent the night just south of the Trail in Taunton. We decided to avoid the Boston Traffic.

The next morning, July 4, we headed the car west. From Taunton we drove to Longfellow's Wayside Inn in Sudbury, Massachusetts. It is the oldest operating inn in the country; since 1716. George Washington passed by the Wayside Inn on his way to take command of the Continental Army in 1775.

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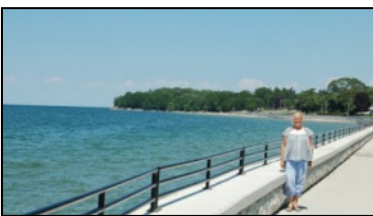
Traveling to the Wayside Inn, we found ourselves on the historic Boston Post Road. Once again it seems that the "named highways" followed established routes. The Yellowstone Trail followed the Boston Post Road in part of Massachusetts just as the Lincoln Highway followed the Pony Express Route, the Overland Trail and other historic roads. Each generation, it seems, builds on what came before.

The Berkshires are not a great mountain range by Western standards, but their rugged rocky face frustrated this nation's best engineers and slowed the westward movement of this country, at least for a short time. It is rugged, yet beautiful country. I wish I had more time to spend here.

Our next small town, Chester, featured an old railroad station which was now a significant museum of railroad history. There was an old wooden caboose, and displays featuring much of the history of railroading through the Berkshires. After Chester we came to the town of Stockbridge, where Norman Rockwell painted memories of his "Main Street America Life." Next was Pittsfield. I loved the lake on the outskirts Pittsfield. It did not look that different from an old postcard scene that I have. Shortly after Pittsfield we entered New York and quickly proceeded toward Albany. We negotiated the streets of Albany, becoming lost only once. After Albany, we proceeded on Route 5 W making our way along the Yellowstone Trail. The morning of July 5 found us just outside of Syracuse, New York, but I decided to skip driving into some of these large cities of the Northeast because I'm a "trafficaphobe". I tell myself that there is little in these big cities that resemble the way they appeared in 1912 through 1927; which is when they would have been part of the Yellowstone Trail or Lincoln Highway. Since I've never really gone into these cities, I don't know if my assumption is correct or not. In any event we skirted the big cities of New York, Pennsylvania and Ohio. We proceeded west from Syracuse through the rolling countryside of New York. The country resembles how it would have appeared in the early part of the 20th century. We know now that not all the East is urban, and we enjoyed a pleasant drive through the country today.



We came to Waterloo, New York, which is the birthplace of Memorial Day. Waterloo became the first city to recognize Memorial Day, or Decoration Day as it was initially called. Both the North and the South, very early on, sought to recognize their Civil War dead. It was in Waterloo, however, where there was truly an organized effort for an entire town to remember its war dead. The date chosen was May 30. Waterloo's effort was later recognized in a congressional resolution as well as a bill signed by President Johnson in the 1960s.



Linda von Tagen enjoying Lake Erie

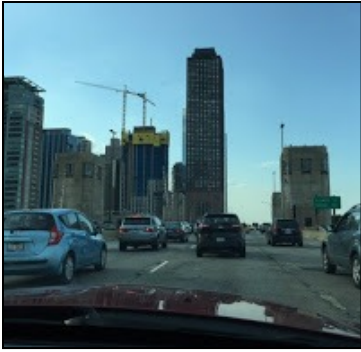
We left the Yellowstone Trail in order to avoid the traffic congestion in Buffalo and instead we followed alternate route US 20 further south and we proceeded west towards Lake Erie. We then followed State Highway 5 and drove along the shore of Lake Erie through the city of Dunkirk, New York. This technically was not the Yellowstone Trail. But it was nice to get a good clear view of Lake Erie and the weather favored us.

We got back on Highway 20 and proceeded west into the tip (only 40 miles wide) of Pennsylvania and then Ohio. When we reached Ohio, we left the US and State highways for the interstate. We recognize that we were cheating, but there really wasn't a lot to see here, so we covered a lot of miles.

July 6 began for us near Cleveland Ohio. We finished in a motel in Illinois within a few yards of Wisconsin. We covered many miles and I broke a few of the rules that I established before starting this trip. The first rule broken had to do with the miles covered. This was to be a trip that was more about seeing things along forgotten highways than it was a trip about covering distance. However, conditions were such that the time seemed ripe for putting extra miles on the odometer. In addition, some of the cities we found ourselves traveling through simply did not seem that interesting. Finally, road conditions would not cooperate. At one point in Ohio, as we approached Indiana we were detoured 20 miles to the east, then south before we were able to cross into Indiana. This put us on the Interstate 20 or 30 miles away from the Yellowstone Trail.

Continued





Driving through the "Windy city"

A second rule that I broke that is probably related to the first broken rule, we drove long hours. That's necessary when you're covering a lot of miles. We began the day about 7:30 am and ended the day at about 7 pm. We are also staying in a motel again, partly because we cannot find a suitable campsite and also because we're tired. A third rule that was broken was that we drove through the heart of a big city (Chicago) during rush hour. We had originally planned to skirt around Chicago at a distance to avoid the traffic, but that would have meant a much larger detour. In addition, I put Chicago in a different category than Buffalo or Erie. I really didn't want to miss it so we did it and peered through our windows at the sights. At least now most of the big cities and the horrific traffic are behind us.

The Yellowstone Trail Association has terrific maps on their website: [www.yellowstonetrail.org](http://www.yellowstonetrail.org). It routed us on or very close to the original Yellowstone Trail. This took us right through quiet neighborhoods, and even through the heart of Chicago! At times the places we drove through had changed very much; other times they had changed very little. It was all interesting to observe. I've talked a lot about the big cities in the traffic, but those Yellowstone Trail maps have also routed us through some beautiful countryside and some terrific small towns and even some great medium-sized towns.

When you consider that our drive across Nevada was in a blizzard and that even in Pennsylvania when we were heading east we observed the new crops coming up, we now are observing the harvesting of wheat. We realize that we've been on the road quite a long time.

Next, we will continue into Wisconsin and then head west towards Minnesota. I'm hoping to slow down more and to view what I think will be the heart of the territory traversed by an old named highway. Ψ

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**The mystery extended**

By John Ridge, President, YTA

In issue # 23 of the *Arrow* we had an historic picture of a "Yellowstone Trail Garage" and the offer of a fabulous prize for the person who could identify its location. The source and the location of the picture were unknown. Well, you just can't make things too hard for some people. We had a winner. Dave Habura sleuthed out the identity of the location and found the building and talked with its present owners. The building was on the corner of Chestnut and 13<sup>th</sup> Ave. in Spokane, Washington.



On our summer 2017 trip along the Trail we drove south out of Spokane past the building to make sure it was still there. Continuing south along the old YT just south of the building on Chestnut, on the corner of 20<sup>th</sup> we noted that there is a 2-rut driveway that looks like it might have been an old alignment of Chestnut rather than at the present paved alignment that cuts fearlessly along the side of the hill. We stopped to look at the driveway and dismissed it as a likely route of the Trail. However, the stop to look paid a dividend; on the west side of Chestnut at the intersection with 20<sup>th</sup> was a great old concrete spring/watering trough. Great for a cool drink for man or beast or radiator fill-up (well it was great, but now it is dry).

Was it there from 1915-1925 when the YT went by? Why was it built there? Who or what used it? Does anyone in Spokane care? It is a neat little reminder of life gone by. Can anyone investigate it and let us all know?

Use the "talk" form on the YT website or send an email to [info@yellowstonetrail.org](mailto:info@yellowstonetrail.org) Not much of an award is being offered but it sounds like a bit of fun! Ψ

Editor's note: This is the third of five articles tracing the emergence of the Yellowstone Trail through Adams County and Hettinger, ND, in an effort to increase awareness of this historical roadway and to focus on the important part that Hettinger and Adams County, ND, played in that effort.

## Marking the Dream

You want to do this *HOW*?

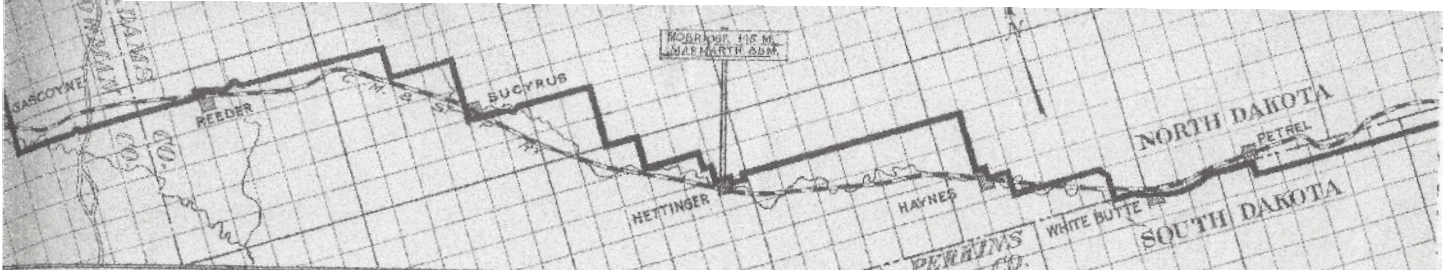
By Bonnie Smith, Hettinger, South Dakota

With dedication to J. W. Parmley's dream and by using their own teams, tools and equipment and their own hard labor, local citizens built the road, the Yellowstone Trail (YT), from Minneapolis, MN, to Seattle, WA, and later all the way to Plymouth, MA. It only needed to be mapped and marked.

Through a system of assessments, local trail associations raised money to maintain the roadway and its markings and the Trail became official, while the parent association set up travel bureaus, supplied travelers with maps, told of weather conditions and listed gas stations, cafes and hotels along the route. They also encouraged towns to provide campgrounds for travelers and were known to hold events on the trail, such as races, which encouraged community and traveler interaction.

The standard mark of the Yellowstone Trail was a yellow band with a black arrow pointing toward Yellowstone Park (look for these on the highway signs placed by the Dakota Buttes Visitors Council on Highway 12 in Adams County), but each community along the Trail was free to choose its own markings. Some areas used cement posts. Others painted a foot-wide band of yellow five feet above the ground on existing telephone or telegraph poles.

To mark the Trail through southwestern North Dakota and west of the Missouri River in northwestern South Dakota, cone-shaped, natural sandstone rocks were placed vertically into the earth. Many of these rocks were originally painted chrome yellow with the words *Yellowstone Trail* lettered in black on the rocks. In Adams County, three of those original stones remain, one in Haynes and two in Hettinger (one is on the corner of the Hettinger Community Development Office and one is outside of C & N Cafe on Highway 12). Others are waiting to be discovered.



Out here, the original Yellowstone Trail, for the most part, followed section lines, as in this diagram of the Trail from Petrel, SD (far right) to Gascoyne, ND (far left) and provided early auto travelers with the first good, well-marked (by standards of the day) road from Minneapolis to Yellowstone Park. The Trail became US Highway 12.

Travelers on the Trail, which most often followed section lines (see photo), watched for foot-high metal bands bent around fence posts. When they came to an embossed "L" for *left*, they turned left. When they came to an embossed "R" for *right*, they knew they had to turn right to stay on the Yellowstone Trail. It was travel by trust. Two of these original metal bands can be seen on the Yellowstone Trail kiosk at the Dakota Buttes Museum in Hettinger.

By the 1920s, conditions on the Trail had improved so much that YT secretary/treasurer O.T. Peterson of Hettinger wrote that the trail through Adams County was in "fair condition," a high compliment in the early 20th century, and cars could "drive through the entire county in high gear without once dropping into intermediate or low."

The dream was now marked and the long anticipated roadway in use.

### Sources:

*Adams County Records* archived at Dakota Buttes Museum - DBHS/M, 400 11th St S, Hettinger, ND.

*Hettinger ND Centennial: 100 Years of Change and Challenge.*- Hettinger Centennial Committee, 2007.

Peterson, O.T., ed. *On the Yellowstone Trail: First Year Book of the Twin Cities-Aberdeen-Yellowstone Park Trail Association*, 1914.

Yellowstone Trail Association: "YTA Then and Now." [www.yellowstonetrail.org](http://www.yellowstonetrail.org)



## Ice Age Flood Sites along the Trail

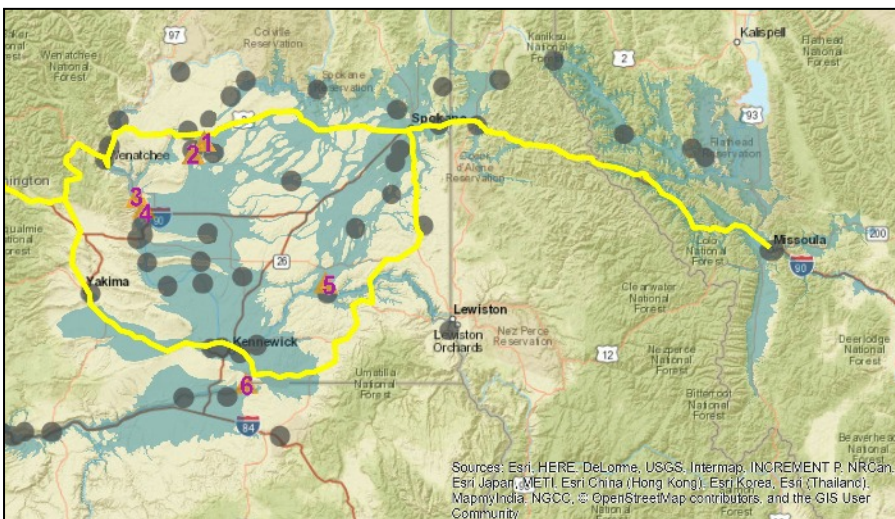
By Dave Habura, YT Northwest Correspondent

The Yellowstone Trail introduces automobilists to an ancient landscape unique in the world.....deep gorges, enormous cliffs, scab lands scoured of all soil, spectacular water falls, and water filled potholes that could float a cruise ship. But it was incomprehensible to Trail travelers 100 years ago. It was so huge it could not be grasped, even by the best scientific minds of the time. Yet it was all within sight.

Many scientists looked at the strange land forms and tried to explain them with the standard geological processes of gradual change over extended periods of time. In the mid-teens of the last century a recent doctoral graduate in Geology, J Harlin Bretz (the J was his first name, no period) taught a year at Washington State University, in Pullman, south of Spokane. He returned to his alma mater the University of Chicago, where he taught the rest of his career. By 1923 he had developed a concept of the formation of the channeled scab lands, and presented it to his colleagues. The concept of massive floods 12 – 15,000 years ago as the cause of the formations was received with scorn and derision, which lasted for decades. It has been during my lifetime that the true story has been accepted. Happily Bretz lived to see the day, passing in 1981.

Even today many travelers crossing these massive and unique land forms don't know what to make of them. But our Trail brings us up close and personal. If we know the story of the Ice Age Floods, the landscape the Trail crosses takes on new meaning, truly new.

The map below shows (gray dots) many of the significant Flood sites and most are on or near the Trail, along the circle formed by the pre and post 1927 Yellowstone Trail routes in Washington. The circle route displays the result of massive floods that scoured the land, cut waterfalls ten times as great as Niagara, and left islands of rich soil undisturbed. During the ice age a monstrous lake, Lake Missoula, as large as Lakes Erie and Ontario combined, formed behind an ice dam near modern day Clarks Fork, ID and flooded the area as far south and east as Missoula, Montana. When the dam burst, and it did several times, the wall of water that rushed out was greater than the flow of all of today's rivers combined, hundreds of feet deep and rushing at 60 to 90 mph.



Imagine a herd of Mastodons grazing peacefully in open fields, hearing a rumbling in the distance, and in minutes being tossed about in a 300 foot deep torrent traveling 75 miles an hour! The force of the water is so great it tears great slabs of basalt from the land and scours it clean of soil. The channeled scab lands of eastern Washington are used today to train for possible Mars missions. Amazingly the formations are quite similar to some on that planet. Massive cliffs and wide flat canyons stream off into the distance. Columns of stone stand like spears pointed skyward.

To many, the eastern Washington landscape is at once barren and harsh, then soft and bountiful. Roads hug sheer cliffs carved by ancient floods hundreds of feet deep, and then pass through rich irrigated farmland growing lush crops. The volcanic rock was no match for the water which unleashed its catastrophic power all the way to the Pacific Ocean, on the way shaping the land and the Columbia River. And our Trail takes you across the devastation, and gigantic evidence of the power of the floods.

Understanding and recognition of the Ice Age Floods has grown in the past few years, I believe in important part because of the work of the **Ice Age Floods Institute** located in Kennewick, WA, a community on the Yellowstone Trail. If you want to explore the Floods, visit their web site: [www.isfi.org](http://www.isfi.org) to get there.

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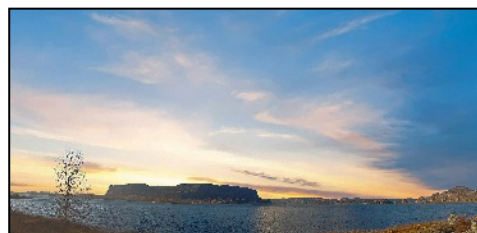


I have selected a few sites to share with you here:

**Dry Falls (left)** is probably the scene most associated in the traveler's mind with the Great Floods. A dry waterfall five times the width and twice as high as Niagara is spread across the horizon, and at its foot a blue green plunge pool. The floods were repeated probably 30 to 40 times over more than a thousand years as the ice dam near Clark Fork collapsed and rebuilt to reform Lake Missoula. Each deluge cut the face of the falls further upstream (a total of 15 miles!!), and what you see is its last position. It is almost unimaginable that water 350 feet deep flowed over the cliff. The volume is estimated at 10,000,000 cubic

meters per second, or over 2,500,000,000 gallons per second!!!! The huge cliff you see would have barely been perceptible!!

**Steamboat Rock (right)** sits as a giant monolith in Banks Lake, north of Coulee City, the product of flood waters rushing on two sides of a huge rock blade and eroding it into an island over 800 feet high.



**Frenchman and Potholes Coulees (left)** are a bit off the Trail, but very near an early route of the National Parks Highway before the Blewett Pass was widely used. For a more detailed look at Frenchman Coulee visit my post on the American Road Yellowstone Trail Forum at <http://americanroadmagazine.com/forum/>.

**Wallula Gap (right)** from upstream along the banks of the Columbia river looks like a sharp edged cleft in the range of hills to the south. Its rather benign appearance belies its dramatic history. It formed the only outlet for the humongous floods on their way to shape the spectacular Columbia River canyon. The Gap could "only" discharge 40 cubic miles of water a day, and 200 cubic miles of water came in to the area north of the cap daily. A 2,000 square mile lake, Lake Lewis, formed behind the narrow neck of the Gap and deepened to over 800 feet. It was a temporary body of water that filled with each flood, and disappeared as it drained.



**Palouse Falls (left)** is spectacular on any count but more so when you can understand and envision its formation. The modern Palouse River is far too small to have carved the large valley bringing it to the Falls. From your observation point you look down on mighty cliffs and a deep canyon formed by the massive floods, not the Palouse River that now flows over the lip of the cliffs in a narrow trough.

I encourage you to visit the amazing Ice Age Flood sites along the Yellowstone Trail, and I suggest two excellent and useful books, *On the Trail of the Ice Age Floods*, and *On the Trail of the Ice Age Floods...The Northern Reaches*, both by Bruce Bjornstad.

They each contain excellent and well described walking and automobile tours to amazing sites. Ψ

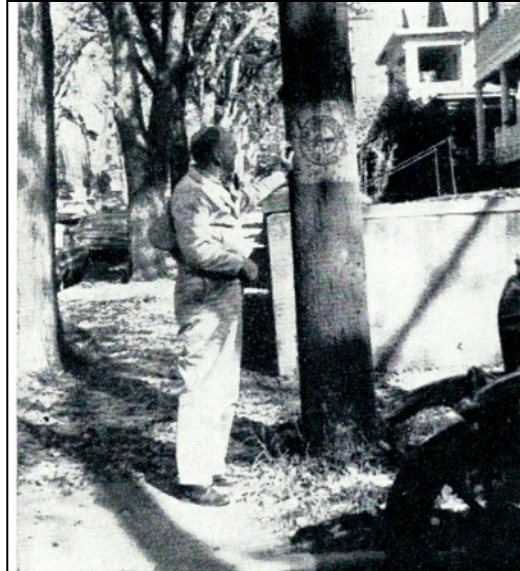


# Mystery at the History Museum

By John Ridge, President, Yellowstone Trail Association

Finding the accurate route of the historic Yellowstone Trail often can be a challenge. No, you can't visit the state department of transportation for definitive information; the Trail was established before the DOT. You seldom find detailed contemporary non-city maps; the few highway maps available with the YT indicated show only a stylized line between cities. No government agency approved or recorded the route and the records of the old YT Association now contain no detailed help (with the exception of the 1914 "Yearbook"), and probably never did. Thus, the modern researcher relies on bits and pieces of information found here and there and, of course, the Automobile Blue Books. If the reader is not familiar with those Blue Books that reader is missing much of the fun and information of the search.

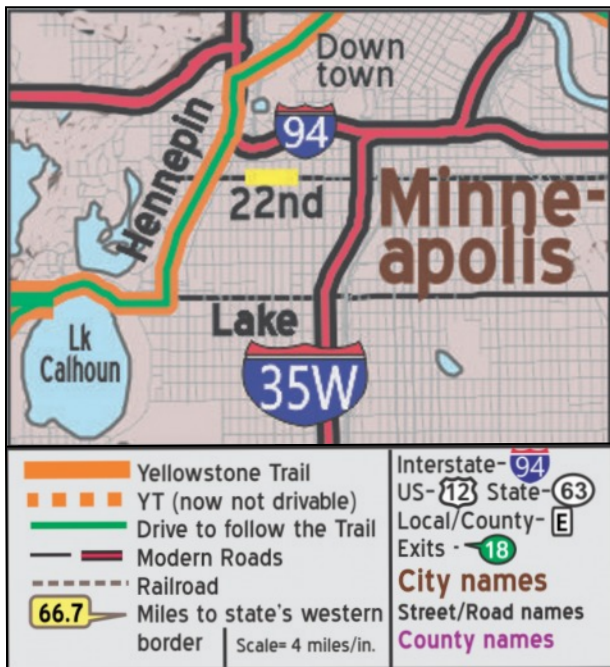
A visit to the Hennepin History Museum (2303 Third Avenue South, Minneapolis, MN 55404) yielded an unexpected and mysterious very short article: "The Yellowstone Trail Markers." It is recorded in the Summer, 1963 issue of Hennepin County History, p. 23. Written by Joseph W. Zalusky, the editor of the journal, the article is a report of his "recent" visit along with a fellow named Joe Lundquist to several extant Yellowstone Trail markings identified by Lundquist. They took pictures of the YT logo on power poles along West 22<sup>nd</sup> St. at Blaisdell, Pillsbury, and Pleasant Avenues. A search for those markings early in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century found nothing remaining.



JOE LUNDQUIST examines one of the Yellowstone Trail markers still extant in Minneapolis.

THIS is a closeup of the Yellowstone Trail marker located on a pole at Pillsbury Avenue and 22<sup>nd</sup> Street. ➡

From Hennepin County History, Summer, 1963, p.23



The mystery? The 1914 Year Book, "On the Yellowstone Trail" clearly records the route to be on Lake St and Hennepin Ave., as do the 1916 Automobile Blue Book, Vol.5, the 1922 Automobile Blue Book, Vol. 3, and the 1925 Automobile Blue Book, Vol.3.

Well, that's a mystery? Did the locals just decide that 22<sup>nd</sup> Street was part of a better route and just marked it? Local citizens often did the locating of the Trail, but did they "forget" to notify the YT Association of this change?

Not too likely; the main office was right downtown. We even gave thought to the potential effect of the location of the home of Hal Cooley, the Administrator of the YTA. But his Lyndale Ave. address just doesn't work.

Dear Reader: If you can shed light on this little mystery, please let us know! Ψ

# 1917 Oakland Nearly Set for Yellowstone Trail Tour

By John Gunnell



John Gunnell's 1917 Oakland Touring

We've been cranking to get my '17 Oakland Touring ready for a trip across Wisconsin. It's part of a plan to celebrate the car's 100<sup>th</sup> birthday. Dave Sarna, a Lions International member and former auto technology instructor at Fox Valley Technical College ([www.fvtc.org](http://www.fvtc.org)) came up with the idea of driving the car over the Wisconsin portion of The Yellowstone Trail to raise money for a Lions Camp for disabled kids located in Rosholt, Wis. ([www.wisconsinlionscamp.com](http://www.wisconsinlionscamp.com)).

There's more to it. This Oakland is kept in an old building in the YT city of Waupaca, Wisconsin that became an Oakland dealership in 1917. The building was a Yellowstone Garage. A 1913 Oakland blazed The Yellowstone Trail. In addition to the Oakland reaching 100, the Lions International is also 100 this year. So, the plan is to take charity pledges for every mile the car goes over the trail without major problems.



Rear view 1917 Oakland Touring

The Yellowstone Trail tour starts on October 9 in Hudson, Wisconsin. From there we will travel east to Waupaca, where the Yellowstone Trail turns south. If all goes well, we will arrive in Kenosha, the afternoon of October 14. Some details are still being worked out, but our tentative schedule is below.

There is a Facebook page "**Century For Sight**": <https://www.facebook.com/centuryforsight/> that has all the latest information about the Wisconsin Yellowstone Trail Oakland Tour.

## YELLOWSTONE TRAIL TOUR STOPS

- |                          |                                                                     |
|--------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Day 1: Monday Oct. 9     | Hudson, WI 9 am - Menomonie, Lunch - Eau Claire, Supper             |
| Day 2: Tuesday Oct. 10   | Cadott, lunch - Abbotsford, Dinner                                  |
| Day 3: Wednesday Oct. 11 | Marshfield, WI - Stevens Point, Dinner                              |
| Day 4 Thursday Oct. 12   | Waupaca, Lunch - Oshkosh, Dinner                                    |
| Day 5 Friday Oct. 13     | Yellowstone Trail Park, North Fond du Lac, Lunch - Hartford, Supper |
| Day 6 Saturday Oct 14    | Hales Corners, Lunch - Kenosha, Supper                              |

In most cities lunch/dinner stops will be arranged by local Lions Clubs. In Waupaca, the lunch will be at Hansen's at 112 Granite St. In Hartford we hope to stop at the Wisconsin Automobile Museum. The Kenosha stop may be at Gateway Classic Cars. We hope to see you along the way. Ψ

| <b>JOIN THE YELLOWSTONE TRAIL ASSOCIATION!</b>                                                                                                                                                                                       |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |                |                                              |      |   |                                                     |                           |   |                                |      |                     |                                          |  |   |                                                                                                                                                   |       |  |  |                           |    |  |  |                                       |  |  |  |                |           |  |
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| Address: _____                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | Send to: Treasurer<br>Yellowstone Trail Association<br>340 Division Street North<br>Stevens Point, WI 54481                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |                |                                              |      |   |                                                     |                           |   |                                |      |                     |                                          |  |   |                                                                                                                                                   |       |  |  |                           |    |  |  |                                       |  |  |  |                |           |  |
| City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____                                                                                                                                                                                                  | <b>Membership category and annual dues:</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |                |                                              |      |   |                                                     |                           |   |                                |      |                     |                                          |  |   |                                                                                                                                                   |       |  |  |                           |    |  |  |                                       |  |  |  |                |           |  |
| An e-mail address is required because the <i>Arrow</i> newsletter is sent via email. If you need yours printed we'll make special arrangements.                                                                                      | <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 10px;">_</td> <td>Regular (Individual or small business) -----</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$15</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="width: 10px;">_</td> <td>Not for profit (museum, car club, historical) -----</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$25</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="width: 10px;">_</td> <td>Tourism Promotion Agency -----</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$50</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td colspan="2" style="font-size: small;">(C of C, CVB, Econ Development, similar)</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="width: 10px;">_</td> <td>Corporate (Contact the Exec. Director for sponsorship details. <a href="mailto:mmowbray@yellowstonetrail.org">mmowbray@yellowstonetrail.org</a>)</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$100</td> </tr> </table>                                      | _              | Regular (Individual or small business) ----- | \$15 | _ | Not for profit (museum, car club, historical) ----- | \$25                      | _ | Tourism Promotion Agency ----- | \$50 |                     | (C of C, CVB, Econ Development, similar) |  | _ | Corporate (Contact the Exec. Director for sponsorship details. <a href="mailto:mmowbray@yellowstonetrail.org">mmowbray@yellowstonetrail.org</a> ) | \$100 |  |  |                           |    |  |  |                                       |  |  |  |                |           |  |
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| _                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | Not for profit (museum, car club, historical) -----                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | \$25           |                                              |      |   |                                                     |                           |   |                                |      |                     |                                          |  |   |                                                                                                                                                   |       |  |  |                           |    |  |  |                                       |  |  |  |                |           |  |
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|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | (C of C, CVB, Econ Development, similar)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |                |                                              |      |   |                                                     |                           |   |                                |      |                     |                                          |  |   |                                                                                                                                                   |       |  |  |                           |    |  |  |                                       |  |  |  |                |           |  |
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| e-mail address : _____                                                                                                                                                                                                               | <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 10px;">Enter Amounts:</td> <td style="width: 60%;">Dues for 1 year (June -May) -</td> <td style="width: 10%; text-align: center;">\$</td> <td style="width: 10%;"></td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>Gifts are tax deductible.</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>Dues for 2nd year -</td> <td style="text-align: center;">\$</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td style="font-size: small;">Same rate. Optional.</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>Additional contribution -</td> <td style="text-align: center;">\$</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td style="font-size: small;">We are a nonprofit 501c3 corporation.</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td><b>Total =</b></td> <td style="text-align: center;"><b>\$</b></td> <td></td> </tr> </table> | Enter Amounts: | Dues for 1 year (June -May) -                | \$   |   |                                                     | Gifts are tax deductible. |   |                                |      | Dues for 2nd year - | \$                                       |  |   | Same rate. Optional.                                                                                                                              |       |  |  | Additional contribution - | \$ |  |  | We are a nonprofit 501c3 corporation. |  |  |  | <b>Total =</b> | <b>\$</b> |  |
| Enter Amounts:                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | Dues for 1 year (June -May) -                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | \$             |                                              |      |   |                                                     |                           |   |                                |      |                     |                                          |  |   |                                                                                                                                                   |       |  |  |                           |    |  |  |                                       |  |  |  |                |           |  |
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