

FALL  
2020

# THE ARROW

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OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE YELLOWSTONE TRAIL ASSOCIATION

*"A Good Road from Plymouth Rock to Puget Sound"*



## Trail-O-Grams

\* Hudson, Wisconsin and Hamlet, Indiana, two faithful hosts of annual Yellowstone Trail Days have reported that due to Covid-19, they have canceled their events this year. Unfortunately, the birthplace of the Yellowstone Trail, Ipswich, South Dakota, has also canceled. Ipswich has had Trail Days events on and off since 1914.

\* The Wausau, Wisconsin, *Pilot & Review*, an e-newspaper, featured an interview with John and Alice Ridge about the history of the Yellowstone Trail. The Trail did not run through Wausau, but close enough to be of interest to readers. The editor, Jim Force, had recently traveled the nearby Trail and included many pictures.

## COVID-19 Not Slowing YT Alliance of Western Minnesota

By Scott Tedrick, YTAWMN President

In spite of COVID-19, the Yellowstone Trail Alliance of Western Minnesota (YTAWMN) continues to make connections and lift the Yellowstone Trail brand. Over the course of 2020, YTAWMN has met monthly via Zoom allowing for ongoing progress with a variety of efforts, including the development of a map/brochure, hosting of a "Sociability Run" and pursuit of community signage.

### Map/Brochure

In November of 2019, YTAWMN held an event recognizing YTAWMN membership communities along the Yellowstone Trail spanning the western half of the state. The sixteen communities stretch 108-miles with populations ranging from 5,100 to 32,000. In the first meetings following the event it was decided that perhaps the most effective way to display community assets and convey historical connectivity would be through a map/brochure.

The document was designed by the group through group input with some map assistance from the county Geographic Information System Specialist. The front of the brochure provides background on the Yellowstone Trail's (YT) history as well as local restaurant, lodging and retail listings. On the back, a 16x22 inch color map highlights the location of historic and cultural sites. Defraying cost with organizational sponsorships, a total 15,000 were printed to be widely distributed.

The map/brochures came in handy for our September 2020 Sociability Run. The event invited automobile enthusiasts (especially historic) to follow the YT in concert with happenings held at various historic and cultural sites within the YT communities.

Happenings during this year's event included a live Horse-pull demonstration and Art gallery display as well as a WWI and coast-to-coast Yellowstone Trail exhibit. Unfortunately, some significant historical locations such as the Fagen WWII Museum remained closed due to the coronavirus. Additionally, plans for a car show were also put on the back-burner this year.

Even with the limitations, the event proved worthwhile and the group is looking forward to hitting the ground running with it again next year.

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### YT Signage

When travelers do return in 2021 there is a good chance they will find common Yellowstone Trail signage amongst communities. YTAWMN members have sought to place signage at the entrances to all YTAWMN towns but have run into a few hurdles. After receiving local approval, issues arose with the highway department indicating the use of "arrow" and "yellow signs" as prohibited.

The group is considering pursuing special legislation or developing a new sign that meets highway department standards. Yellowstone Trail Association President John Ridge has recently designed some new and attractive possibilities.

The hope is to have a sign that will be permissible in every state. Ψ

For those interested in connecting with YTAWMN, email: [yellowstonetrailalliance@gmail.com](mailto:yellowstonetrailalliance@gmail.com)



## Vigilante Trail By Curt Cunningham, YT Washington State

In 1915, Yellowstone National Park was opened for automobile traffic, and in the first 10 days, 321 cars entered the park; 151 at the west entrance, 86 at the north entrance, 83 at the east entrance and 1 car entered at the south entrance.

Vacationers who were traveling from the Pacific Northwest on the Yellowstone Trail could use a cut-off road southeast of Butte, Montana, that was the shortest and most direct route to the west entrance of the park. This cut-off road was also a shorter distance than the main route to Livingston and the north entrance to the park at Gardiner that was promoted by the YTA.

To capitalize and to increase the traffic on this cut-off, the commercial interests of Butte organized a meeting on October 22, 1919, where 250 citizens from Silver Bow, Jefferson and Madison counties attended. The result of the meeting was the formation of the Vigilante Trail Association. The route was touted as a road where almost every mile was the scene of a robbery, murder or hanging.

The trail began about 20 miles southeast of Butte at the junction of the Yellowstone Trail, at Cedar Ridge, and ran through the towns of Twin Bridges, Sheridan, Nevada City, Virginia City, Ennis and terminated at the west entrance to Yellowstone Park.

The sign adopted for the route was a circle painted with red, white and blue stripes and included the mystic figures, "3-7-77" which was used by the Vigilantes to warn the criminals that their presence in the country was no longer desirable.

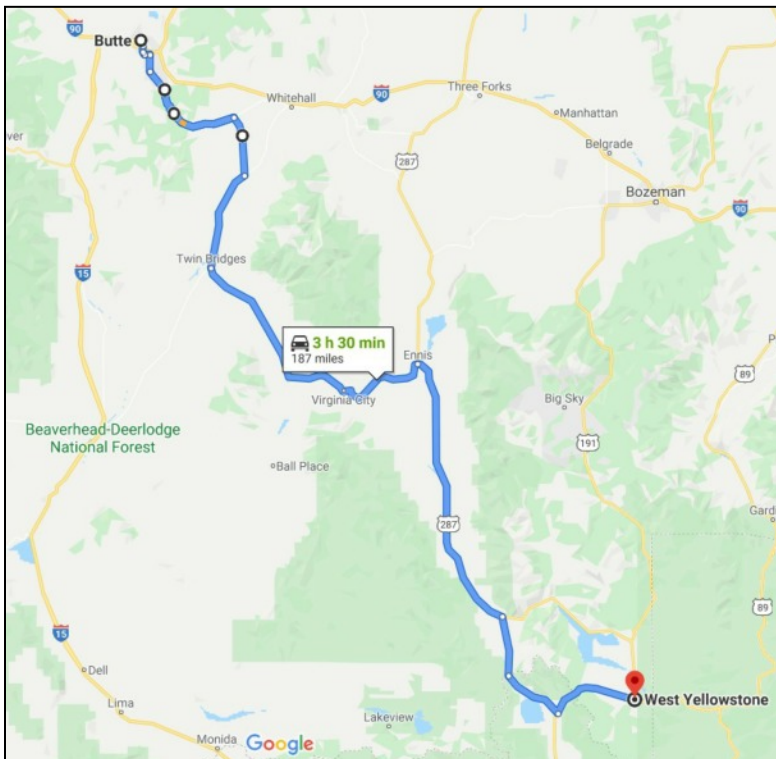


Near this junction of the two trails was the reputed spot where Sacagawea was captured by a hostile tribe and had to be rescued from her captors. Years later, she guided Lewis and Clark up the Jefferson River and they passed near the spot where she had been taken.

The trail ran on the old Ruby Valley Road through the historic gold mining district of Alder Gulch and Virginia City. Virginia City is located 7 miles west of Alder Gulch and is one of the oldest settlements in the West. In the 1860s, it was the temporary home for thousands of placer miners.

Word of the discovery reached the masses by the summer of 1863, which triggered a stampede of thousands of prospectors rushing to the region. Among the later arrivals were desperadoes and outlaws who, scenting the prey from afar, flew like vultures to the carcass. From the west came a gang of thieves who would become the "Road Agents" and would terrorize and rob people who were traveling between Virginia City and Bannack.

Between these two mining camps, a correspondence was kept and the roads throughout the territory were under constant surveillance by the agents.



They devised a system that would mark the horses, men and coaches that were worthy of robbing, and that information would be passed to the highwaymen in time before their victims could escape. The road agents, who were also known as the “Innocents, levied toll on every traveler by robbing and murdering with the greatest impunity. At every turn from Bannack to Virginia City, they held up stages, pack trains and individual miners, killing those who resisted, and beat those who had nothing. So complete their sway, so stern their rule, more than 200 lives were lost along that road. Sheriff Henry Plummer was the chief and everyone knew it. He and some of his men eventually were hanged at Bannack in 1864”.

“In 1870, the first chief justice of Montana Territory Hezekiah L. Hosmer had said; "The attraction brought those who came to work and those who came to profit off the labor of others. Had the convicts been set free by the approach of Napoleon, on the condition they burn Moscow,

and had instead been thrown upon these new settlements, it could not have been worse than it was with the crowd that entered and took control of Bannack and Virginia City in 1862 and 1863.”



If a man brought suit to recover a stolen horse, he would be apt to meet in court with a band of dishonest witnesses who would swear that the contested property belonged to the thief. Thus the man was not only robbed of his property but had to pay the expenses of the suit as well. Gambling and wild women were the main features of every mining camp and these activities were another place for the miners to lose their money. Ladies of the evening plied their trade in the open daylight and the brothels were the lures where many a man was entrapped for robbery and murder. Dance houses sprang up and everyone who visited these establishments were in some way relieved of the money they brought with them. Many good men who dared to show any signs of disgust were shot down by a member of the gang at the first opportunity.

The headquarters of these desperadoes was at the Daley ranch otherwise known as the “Robbers’ Roost.” The old inn was located beside the road 4 miles southeast of Sheridan. Of all the villains and criminals who rested at the roost, the most renowned and despised of them all was George Ives, a ruthless servant of the devil. This state of affairs could not go on forever. All of the friends of justice were relentlessly threatened and watched by the agents. Things began to change when Virginia City and Nevada City formed a Vigilante Committee.

The committee was approved and supported by all those who had anything to lose, or who thought their lives were at risk. Merchants, miners, mechanics and professional men alike joined in the movement until, within an incredibly short space of time, the Road Agents were in a state of constant fear. George Ives was the first victim of the newly formed Vigilante Committee. They captured him not far from Robbers’ Roost. Ives was transported to Nevada City where they put him on trial.

Ives begged to be taken to Virginia City claiming that the populace of the lower town must be prejudiced against him, for he had once killed a dog that had bit him while he was there. He was loaded with logging chains, hauled into court and on December 21, 1863, he was hanged. His companions in crime, Red Yager and G. W. Brown, the bartender at the Robbers' Roost, were rounded up and hanged within the next two weeks.

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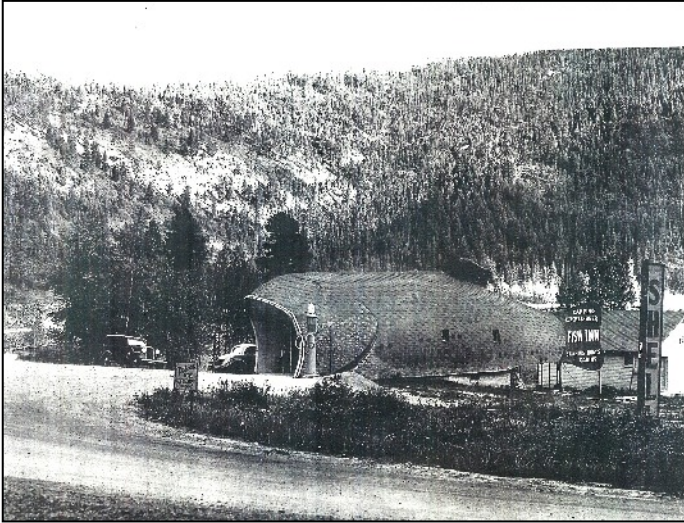




## Kellogg, ID – From Ashes to Tourists

By Alice Ridge

“Kellogg is a city on the Yellowstone Trail in the Silver Valley of Shoshone County, Idaho, in the Idaho Panhandle region. The city lies near the Coeur d'Alene National Forest and about 36 miles east-southeast of Coeur d'Alene along Interstate 90.” That sterile description doesn't even scratch the surface of the story of Kellogg. We write a bit of it here because a new friend of the Trail, Ross Stout, has unearthed a few photos of Kellogg, showing its quirky bent, just past the Yellowstone Trail era.



Big Fish Restaurant on the Trail near Kellogg, Idaho

First, a bit of its history. The Bunker Hill and Sullivan Mining and Concentrating Company began in Kellogg around 1887. Several minerals were mined, mainly lead, zinc and silver. The name “Silver Valley” applied to several towns along the Trail there, implying that not only silver was to be found, but other minerals as well, making the valley mineral-rich. The company built the town to accommodate the growing number of miners, building a church, school, homes and establishing a loan program so the miners could own their homes. In Yellowstone Trail days, the company also built a hospital and a YMCA. The history of this mine was no different from that of Butte, Montana in spite of advances: mine accidents, poor safety inspections, strikes. But the company prevailed for 80 years.

Gulf Resources & Chemical Corp. purchased Bunker Hill stock in a hostile takeover bid in 1968. At that time Bunker Hill employed about 2,800 employees at its Kellogg complex. The Bunker Hill mine and smelter complex closed in 1982, due to lower metal prices, and lower EPA limits for lead. Over 2,000 people were then left unemployed in the small town.

To add to the sorrow was the devastation of the environment for miles around the mine. The company had built and operated its own lead smelter in Smeltonville, three miles away in 1917. The giant lead smelter contaminated the air there and in Kellogg because of some of the biggest lead releases in U.S. history. Even contemporary travel literature descriptions of the area were bleak.

In the 1930s, the Works Project Administration (WPA, Idaho) wrote that:

Kellogg is a famous mining spot, with the Bunker Hill and Sullivan, the largest lead mine in the United States, located here. Above it the denuded mountains declare the potency of lead. The Sullivan Mine here has a development of sixty-four and a half miles and (with 560 men) the largest payroll of any mine in the State.

It would take the EPA decades and millions to clean up the mess, but the result is a renewed economy and creative use of their magnificent scenery and mountains.

It was the Rise of the Phoenix! *Superfund Sites in Reuse/Kellogg, Idaho* wrote that,

Starting in 1987, the city of Kellogg began to pursue redevelopment opportunities at cleaned-up portions of the site. The site is now home to the Silver Mountain Resort, which includes a neighborhood, residential condominiums, commercial development, indoor water park, a golf course, and a ski area. The EPA facilitated additional development throughout the Silver Valley. This included many commercial developments, apartment housing, and it converted contaminated land along a railroad to a renowned, paved 72-mile recreational trail (The Trail of the Coeur d'Alenes). To date, more than 1,800 acres of property have been transferred to the State for economic development projects. Four hundred acres of land have been converted into healthy wetland.

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Unfortunately, travelers on the Yellowstone Trail 100 years ago would have seen a very sad Kellogg. The Trail went right through downtown Kellogg on Cameron St., within view of the blight. With the Coeur d'Alene River and a railroad squeezed through a mountainous terrain, there are few choices for a road. That was the case through most of the 90 mile route of the Trail across Idaho's panhandle. Today there is no sign of this sad past as we list a few things a present Trail traveler might like to see.

On the corner of E. Cameron Ave. and S. Division Street is a building that Yellowstone Trail travelers might well have stopped at. It was called Yellowstone Trail Garage. Today it is part of Dave Smith Motors. For 100 years that building has served as an automotive garage. The Staff House on McKinley Ave. was built in the Yellowstone Trail era as a hostel for visiting mining managers and inspectors. Today it is an interesting mining museum.



The Yellowstone Trail Garage during the YT days



Silver Mountain Gondola | Kellogg, Idaho

The Silver Mountain was there in Yellowstone Trail days to be viewed, but now, summer or winter you can ride the Silver Mountain Gondola to the top of the mountain. It is billed as “the world’s longest single-stage gondola.” Up you go – 3.1 miles and 3,400 vertical feet in 16 minutes. You may have to duck while wandering around downtown, though. That gondola crosses Cameron St. at a pretty low altitude. East of town near Exit 54 of I-90 is the Sunshine Mine Disaster Memorial. A 13-foot-tall metal miner, with a glowing headlamp, memorializes the Sunshine Mine disaster of 1972. The statue stands behind 91 miniature tombstones. This memorial is an important cultural and historic site for the residents.

Quirky, novelty architecture cropped up shortly after the Trail Association collapsed. It seems that Kellogg has retained its sense of humor over the decades. Perhaps soon some current Yellowstone Trail Association yellow signs will grace Cameron St. Ψ



Former Miner's Hat Diner, now a Realty firm



# Traffic Survey

By John Ridge

Our interest in the Yellowstone Trail stems from an offhand remark made by my father sometime many years ago. He said something like: "When I drove from where I was teaching in northern Wisconsin (he taught science there from the late 1920s to 1936) to my family home in southern Wisconsin, I crossed that highway called the Yellowstone Trail at Eau Claire. Used to drive part of it to Montana, too."

Alice and I moved to Eau Claire in 1967, but that comment didn't emerge in our lives until about 1996, when we took a vacation trip west and decided, on the spot, that we had to know more about the mysterious Yellowstone Trail. It turned out to be a "named highway" that existed before government numbered highways. For nearly 25 years in retirement we have pursued knowledge about it.

As part of that search we turned up a 1912 traffic survey of the use of the bridge crossing the Columbia River in Wenatchee, Washington. That was three years before the Trail was extended into Washington and 13 years

before the route was moved to that very bridge. Back to my father. That traffic survey caught our attention because my high school science teacher dad was the administrator of traffic surveys in my home town of Wausau, Wisconsin, just after WW II and the Wenatchee data sheet looked a lot like the papers I "helped" my dad with as a youth.

The survey makes real the state of transportation in 1912, the very beginning of the mass influx of autos into daily life. It shows that something like four autos per hour (daylight hours) crossed the Columbia River. About the same number of people walked across! Something like an average of 20 teams of horses crossed per hour. Well, it was a "wagon bridge." I find the very fact that a traffic survey was undertaken in 1912 to be surprising, but justifying such large expenditures for bridges in 1912 was probably even more important than today.

Ψ

I, J. J. Davis after being first duly sworn depose and say that I am a citizen of the state of Washington and reside in the city of Wenatchee; That I am over the age of 21 years and competent to make affidavit; That under the direction and employ of Jno. A. Gellatly I kept an accurate account of the teams, Autos, Footmen, Horsemen, Bikes & other vehicles which crossed the Wagon Bridge which spans the Columbia river near the southern limits of said city of Wenatchee, for the seven days beginning June, 27th, 1912 and ending July 3rd, 1912, between the hours of ~~5~~ 5 O'Clock A.M. and 10 O'Clock P.M. of each of said days; That the list below is a correct statement of said crossings, viz:

Dates	Teams	Autos	Bikes	Horse- men	Pedes- trians	Steam- Roller	Total
June 27th, 1912.	234	38	12	25	37		346
June 28th, 1912	212	46	16	20	51	1	346
June 29th, 1912.	372	43	11	40	31		497
(Sunday) (Rained all day) June 30th, 1912	132 <del>288</del>	28	11	21	90		282
July 1st, 1912.	236	31	10	25	45		337
July 2nd, 1912.	260	41	7	23	69		400
July 3rd, 1912.	263	64	4	22	55		408
TOTALS	1709	291	71	176	378	1	2616

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ J. J. Davis  
 Subscribed and sworn to before me this 6th day of July, A.D. 1912.  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Notary Public for the state of Washington, residing at Wenatchee in said State.

NOTE  
 This statement does not give the most favorable showing of the traffic across said bridge for the reason that there is no farm produce being hauled to market at this season of the year.  
 The third of July, being the day before the celebration naturally would be a light traffic day, and the rains of Sunday and Monday, the 29th and 30th of June, also had the effect of lessening traffic.

Jno A Gellatly



## The von Tagen's Are Back ON The YT!

From their Blog: <https://afordonthelincn.blogspot.com/>

We finished our cross-country trip and made our last entry on this blog on July 14, 2017. We ended our trip at Yellowstone National Park. We drove home to Boise, across the Southern Idaho Desert and put the car and tent trailer away. But there was one thing wrong; we hadn't really finished the Yellowstone Trail. It is true that an earlier generation of the Yellowstone Trail terminated at Yellowstone National Park, but fairly soon thereafter the Yellowstone Trail Association sponsored the building of a transcontinental road all the way to Puget Sound. The Yellowstone Trail then joined the Lincoln Highway as one of the earliest transcontinental roads!



It has always bothered me that we didn't complete this trip all the way to Puget Sound. Even though on other occasions we've driven what was once the Yellowstone Trail from our home in Idaho to Seattle, I wanted to do it as part of this effort. So as Willie Nelson sings: "We're on the Road Again".

We're starting a bit late, and it would have been better to have done this trip during the summer time, but COVID got in the way. But it is better late than never.

On our first day we managed to get out of the house and on the road by 8:30. We drove first to the Boise Depot to get a picture of the city and

of our "rig". Then it was off to Mountain Home and Yellowstone National Park to pick up "The Trail" again.

Editor's note: We will feature an article on the entire trip in our January Arrow. Ψ

## The Garage by THE SIDE of THE ROAD

By Anonymous

There are luckless men who toil for years, And never save a cent,  
There are rivals of Fords, who make more cars, Than the stars in the firmament,  
There are men who preach; there are men who teach; There are men who plead at the bar-  
Let me run a garage by the side of the road And tinker at passing cars.  
Let me run a garage by the side of the road Where the cars stream by in line--  
The cars that are good and the cars that are bad, As good and as bad as mine.  
I would not sit in a driver's seat, And drive an old tin can-  
Let me run a garage by the side of the road, And retail gas to man.  
I see as I work by the side of the road, By the side of the highway of grit,  
Sedans that pass in eight-cylinder pride. And flivvers that chug and spit,  
But I turn not away from their cams nor their gears, Both needful, they certainly are,  
As I run my garage by the side of the road And tinker the passing car.  
I know there are rock-strewn highways ahead And detours that beckon afar;  
That the road passes on through mud and through dust Into liquid stretches of tar,  
And so I rejoice when the travelers drive in, And weep when I have them all done,  
Nor run my garage by the side of the road As one who works for fun.  
Let me run a garage by the side of the road, Where the cars stream by in line-  
They are good, they are bad, they are fast, they are slow, Punk, balky- so is mine.  
Then why should I sit in the driver's seat And steer my old tin can?  
Let me run my garage by the side of the road And retail gas to man. Ψ