

'Iskítpe

A Publication of the Nez Perce National Historic Trail Foundation

Volume 1 Issue 1

Pik'unma'ayq'áal 1999

1999 Annual Meeting and Education Sessions

a s u c c e s s s

by Brian McCormack

About 65 people attended each day of education sessions and tours of the Nez Perce National Historic Trail Foundation's 1999 annual meeting. The meetings were held June 17 - 20 in Wallowa, Oregon. People from as far away as Vermont, Kansas and Wisconsin were in attendance, as well as locals from the Wallowa valley. About 40% of the audience and panelists were tribal members from the Nez Perce, Umatilla, Colville, and Flathead reservations.

The Wallowa Band Nez Perce Trail Interpretive Center provided their meeting hall and the Tamkaliks powwow grounds for use as a tepee and tent village. Several tepees were erected around a campfire where people told stories, danced, sang, and caught up with friends and family. The weather was perfect and everyone had a good time.

Several members of the Foundation kicked off the sessions by attending the Nez Perce Tribe's memorial at the White Bird Battlefield on the morning of June 17. Those that attended were impressed by the number of horses and riders in full regalia, and many had never before experienced a pipe ceremony.

The annual meeting started on the morning of June 18 with a traditional song from Umatilla tribal member Tessie Williams. It was followed by a

report from agency representatives of the U.S. Forest Service, National Park Service, and Idaho Dept. of Commerce. They provided updates on upcoming projects and efforts to protect, restore and interpret various segments of the trail.

We began the educational portion of the annual meeting with a tribal panel discussion led by Albert Andrews Redstarr titled: "Healing our Nez Perce Nation." With the assistance of Diane Mallickan, Carla Higheagle, Sharon Redthunder, and Tessie Williams, this panel discussed healing the wounds and divisions between the various descendant groups of the Nez Perce. The theme of healing continued throughout many of the discussion panels on both days.

The roles of women in Nez Perce culture, history and contemporary life were also presented in several panel discussions led by women Nez Perce descendants. Historical accounts have not always told the women's stories, and many of the panelists felt it was an appropriate time to tell these stories at this important location. At times the sessions became quite emotional as tribal members shared personal stories and family histories. Hopefully, many of the non-Indian participants came away with a better understanding of the Nez Perce's strong emotional connections to the land of the Wallowa

country.

Each day the Foundation provided bus tours to different places in Wallowa country that had historical significance to the Nez Perce people. Dave Clark (USFS) led the first day's tour to the Biscuit Mounds, the Indian Village Cambium Peeled Trees Grove, and finally to the spectacular Buckhorn Overlook and Lookout. On Saturday, Diane Mallickan of the Nez Perce National Historical Park (NPNHP) gave a presentation about the cultural items that *Niimípuu* used in daily lives. Later in the day we traveled to the Old Chief Joseph (*Tuekakas*) Gravesite at the north end of Wallowa Lake. Tim Nitz of the NPNHP gave a very interesting historical sketch of the gravesite.

On Saturday evening Joe McCormack and the Wallowa Band Interpretive Center members prepared an excellent salmon dinner with huckleberry dessert. More than 80 people sat down for dinner, followed with a presentation from George Hatley about the history of the Appaloosa horse rides along the trail.

On Sunday, the Foundation held their business meeting where they elected a new board of directors. This is the first time in the Foundation's history that *Niimípuu* descendants from the each of the three tribes (Nez Perce, Colville and Umatilla) were

elected to serve on the board of directors. The new board reelected all the previous years' officers (see list at end of newsletter).

Welcome from the Secretary

by Brian McCormack

After two years serving the Foundation as secretary, I have learned many things about community involvement and commitment. In the next year my goal as secretary is to increase the visibility of the NPNHT Foundation by promoting the trail whenever and wherever possible. I hope to accomplish this by increasing the membership, publishing a quarterly newsletter, and updating our web site.

This is our first newsletter in almost a year. Please let us know what you think. Future issues will feature more graphics, especially photos from our various events. As secretary, I will serve as editor of the newsletter for the next year.

This is an exciting time for the Foundation, especially as everyone starts to gear up for the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial. In north-central Idaho, they are expecting 3-6 million visitors during the years 2003-6. That prospect is a little daunting, as much of the Nez Perce Trail was also the route used by the *Corps of Discovery*. We want to educate the public about

Brian is the current secretary of the NPNHT Foundation and is an enrolled member of the Nez Perce Tribe and a Wallowa Band

our trail, especially the fragility of this cultural resource. Hopefully through our educational pursuits, we can provide a vital link to the public and teach them to respect the land and its inhabitants. *Qe'ciyéw'yew'*.

The 6th National Scenic and Historic Trails Conference

The Partnership for the National Trails System will hold their annual meeting September 12-16 in Zephyr Cove, Nevada. Join federal trail managers, state, and local agency partners and trail organization leaders from throughout America to renew friendships, share information and enjoy the beauty and history of the high Sierra. The officers of the NPNHT Foundation attended last year's meeting in Kansas City and helped to define the national mission statement. Representatives from the NPNHT Foundation also plan on attending this year.

Contact Gary Werner, Partnership for the National Trails System, 608-249-7870 of NATTRAILS@aol.com for information and registration materials.

descendant. He owns and operates McCormack Landscape Design from his home office in Lapwai, Idaho.

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

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

*Spring/March 20; Summer/June 20;
Fall/September 20; Winter/December 20*

Subscriptions: Subscriptions are free to members of the Nez Perce National Historic Trail Foundation. One-year subscription for non-members is \$10 to cover the costs of printing and postage. For more information, call Brian McCormack at (208) 798-3249.

A Message from the NPNHT Foundation President

by Nick Hudson

Thank you to everyone who attended the annual meeting at Wallowa in June. It was successful because everyone participated in the discussions. The topics were sometimes sensitive and it was good to hear people speak from their hearts, even when it was difficult and emotional. I know that we all gained a lot of understanding about the feelings that raise up when we are in the places along the Trail that have so much history.

We preserve and protect the Trail because those feelings

are important, and we do not want to lose the places that evoke such emotion, and transport us to a deep sense of past events and struggles that still go on today.

It was good to see tepees on the Coalition grounds, set on the green grass near the river, with the snow-capped Wallowa Mountains as a backdrop. And it was good to wake up there and hear Tessie's morning song.

There is much to be done to plan for the impact of the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial. The various agencies have

been working on strategies. The Clearwater National Forest has published a strategy paper which you may request from Linda Fee, Bicentennial Coordinator, Kooskia Ranger Station, Rt. 1, Box 398, Kooskia, ID 83539, or E-mail at lfee/rl_clearwater@fs.fed.us

Women in the Nez Perce War

by Ruth Wapato

Life after the 1877 Chief Joseph War was a dismal existence for the survivors of the war. Chief Joseph and his group were sentenced to live in Indian Territory (present-day Oklahoma). Many men, women and children died in Indian Territory, know to them as *Eikish Pah* --- the hot place, so different from their beloved Wallowa. Those that managed to escape with White Bird into Canada found living difficult in a foreign country. Some wandered back into the United States. Propertyless, separated from family and friends, hunted by U.S. troops, theirs was a precarious, pitiable existence. If caught, some were sent to join Chief Joseph. Others were permitted by friendly agents to remain on the Lapwai reservation. Still others wandered from one reservation to another until Joseph returned from Oklahoma and they then rejoined the tribe.

The women are often overlooked in war. From a list compiled by Many Wounds and Black Eagle of the Nez Percés who escaped and were never captured, not one woman is mentioned. Usually the thought is that women stay home and are safe. The Nez Perce women suffered along with their husbands, fathers and sons. Women and children saw their fathers, mothers, sisters, brothers and grandparents wounded and killed. They were hungry and cold with their warriors. Women provided food, water, clothing and fresh horses when their warriors were in battle. They dug shelter pits for the old people and children, using their camas hooks for digging. They took care of the wounded. They buried the dead. At the same time, they had to take care of every day living---set up camp, take down camp, prepare food, provide clothing, get wood, get water, take care of the horses, keep the fires going, dig roots when they could, dry meat when they could, cut poles for tepees which had to be

Foundation's Mailing Address Moves to Lewiston

The Nez Perce National Historic Trail Foundation has moved their mailing address to Idaho. This new location will better serve the Foundation as it allows easier access for the current Secretary. The Missoula address did not allow for timely retrieval of incoming mail. Please make a note of our new address and send all future correspondence to:

Again, thank you to everyone who participated in the Wallowa meeting, and special thanks to Joe McCormack, Jo Hallam, and the Interpretive Center and Coalition folks for hosting the meeting and providing a terrific salmon dinner.

peeled and dried for dragging. They had to be midwives as there were pregnant women in the group.

What happened to these women who survived the war? It is not clear but evidence indicates that Yellow Wolf's mother was exiled to Indian Territory. Chief Joseph's daughter, *Kapkap Ponmi* was turned over to her aunt and placed in the Lapwai Agency School. She married George Moses, a full-blood Nez Perce in Spalding in 1879. Martha Minthorn, daughter of Looking Glass, lived in Canada for nine years on a reserve set aside for the Nez Perce fugitives. She then returned to Sweetwater on the Nez Perce Reservation in Idaho. She died February 9, 1949 at the age of 93. *Penahwenonmi*, wife of Wounded Head, was shown in a picture taken in Spalding, so I assume she returned to the Lapwai Reservation in Idaho. She died March 15, 1938 at the age of 95. *Wetatonmi*, wife of Ollokot, escaped with White Bird to Canada, spent two years with the Sioux, then wandered about, spending winter of 1881 with the Spokanes, finally returning to Lapwai where she was allowed to settle. She remarried and became Susie McConville. She died in 1934.

There were many nameless women of all ages who lost their lives. In our hearts we will remember these brave women whose lives were cut short by the Nez Perce War of 1877.

Ruth Wapato is a Chief Joseph band descendant and board member of the NPNHT Foundation. Along with other Nez Perce women, she made a presentation at our Annual Meeting. She lives in Bend, Oregon with her husband, Paul, treasurer of the NPNHT Foundation.

Nez Perce National Historic Trail Foundation
P.O. Box 1939
Lewiston, Idaho 83501

You may contact any of the officers or board members directly by referring to the Foundation listing at the end of this newsletter.

Calendar of Events:

SEPTEMBER 1999 (*pikunma'ayq'áal*)

11 *Nez Perce War of 1877 Memorial - Canyon Creek Battle, Laurel, Montana.

12-17 Sixth Conference on National Scenic and Historic Trails, Zephyr Point, Lake Tahoe, NV. Contact: Partnership for the NTS, 608-249-7870.

24-25 Nez Perce Tribe General Council, Wa'ayas, Kamiah, Idaho.

OCTOBER 1999 (*hóopl'al*)

2 *Nez Perce War of 1877 Memorial, Fort Walsh, Canada.

3 *Nez Perce War of 1877 Memorial - Bears Paw Mountains, Chinook, Montana.

**Contact the Nez Perce Tribe at (208) 843-2253 for more information.*

The Nez Perce at Eikish Pah (the Hot Place)

by Larry O'Neal

Chief Joseph and 421 of his people arrived at the Baxter Springs, Kansas railroad station late in the evening of July 21, 1878. This was the southern terminus of the railroad from Ft. Leavenworth. The Nez Perce had been camped at Ft. Leavenworth since their removal following the end of the Nez Perce War the previous November.

Baxter Springs was the end of the railroad line, and also this was the jumping off place into Indian Territory. Not only the Nez Perce, but several other tribes arrived at this destination before their ultimate resettlement on the reservations of northeast Oklahoma.

The Quapaw Reserve in present day Ottawa County, Oklahoma in 1878 was under the direction of agent Hiram Jones and his Quaker family. Joseph's people were ordered settled on the small Modoc reservation about 1½ miles from the agency headquarters. The total area was less than nine square miles. The water source was a single creek that even today flows sporadically. The heat was oppressive. Shelters were nonexistent. The living conditions in this campsite were horrendous resulting in immediate sickness (dysentery) and rapid deaths.

The people were ordered moved by the Commissioner of Indian Affairs. A second site was procured from the Peoria Tribe about five miles from the Modocs. Although not as crowded, the Nez Perce continued to suffer through the autumn and winter. Short rations, spoiled rations, inadequate medical supplies and lack of provisions for winter survival such as blankets and tents all contributed to the suffering of Joseph's people. The death and misery that was so pervasive during the encampment at the Quapaw

Reserve was needless and inexcusable. The guilt lay entirely in the hands of the Quaker agent and his family. They had total control of all the Indian tribes in their agency. Their intentional neglect for the basic needs of their wards, using the threat of withholding rations as punishment for things such as not attending Quaker church services, or not sending the children to the Quaker Boarding School was always on the Indian's minds. The Quaker desire to save souls and civilize the heathen resulted in countless deaths and much misery. These facts were documented on many occasions by local residents at that time who condemned the agency staff in newspaper editorials. Nearly 100 died in the camps that year.

In April of 1879 Joseph's people moved again. This time they were not directed to. They moved about five miles south of Baxter Springs on the Quapaw Reservation. Here they remained until early in June. It was negotiated that four townships of land would be purchased from the Poncas, 177 miles to the west. From here they proceeded west to their next "permanent home." *Eikish Pah* would remain their home for the next six years.

Larry O'Neal, a college history major, one-time history teacher and retired insurance agent, has been interested in the history of his home town of Baxter Springs, Kansas forever. He has conducted all his research on his own time, and traveled all the way to Wallowa to make his presentation at our Annual Meeting. His attention to detail impressed many at the meeting, and he has been invited to speak at the Nez Perce National

Nez Perce National Historical Park seeks Public Input for Bear Paw Battlefield Visitor Facilities

In August a series of five meetings were held to gather public input regarding visitor contact facilities at or near Bear Paw Battlefield. These meetings were the result of the park's 1997 General Management Plan which determined visitor facilities and operational support will be provided at the battlefield. The purpose of this current study is to answer questions and receive comments from the public about basic visitor center feasibility questions and explore various options such as the purpose and need of a facility, the location, costs, design, staffing and other issues.

We will provide a summary of these meetings in our

next issue. For further information contact Jon James at Big Hole National Battlefield at (406) 689-3155.

Special Edition Chief Joseph Revolvers

Two Colt .45 Chief Joseph Nez Perce special edition revolvers available for purchase. Rare collector Colts, in perfect, new condition. Price range: \$2500-\$3000. These revolvers were manufactured in 1977 on occasion of the Centennial of Nez Perce War of 1877. For more information, contact Nick Hudson at (435) 655-3210.

NPNSF Foundation's 2000 Annual Meeting Scheduled for Cody, Wyoming

We are planning our next meeting for Cody, Wyoming, during the weekdays of September 11-15, 2000, depending on which weekend is selected for the Canyon Creek commemoration (the actual battle date was Sept. 13th). Cody is not far from Canyon Creek, and the Trail connects the two places through Littlerock Creek, Belfry and Bridger. Cody is also near the Clarks Fork exit from the Absaroka Mountains and Sunlight Basin along Wyoming 296, designated as "The Chief Joseph Highway." This is a very interesting and scenic area. The band moved through this area on Sept. 8-11, 1877.

We hope that many of you will have time to make a complete loop from Cooke City, or Red Lodge, into Cody and also go to Canyon Creek for the commemoration. We will let you know as soon as the Canyon Creek weekend is selected...it will be either Sept. 9-10, or Sept. 16-17. The meeting will take place on weekdays next year, as we will go to Canyon Creek on the weekend. As you can tell, our meeting dates will closely coincide with the anniversary dates of the band's passage through this area, so you can plan your visit to be in the same places on the same dates. Mark your calendars now!!!

Niimiipuutimt (Nez Perce Language)

Throughout this newsletter and upcoming issues you will see italicized words. These are words of the Nez Perce language or *niimiipuutimt*. Language plays an important role in understanding the culture of a people. The Foundation would like to introduce you to common and not so common Nez Perce words still used today. Please feel free to practice these words, and if you need help in pronunciation, the Nez Perce Tribe is working on a collection of language tapes.

hóopl'al (hope-lul) when tamarack needles fall, corresponding roughly to October

'iskítpe (iss-kít-pah) on the trail, path, road

niimúpuu (nee-mee-poo) the Nez Perce people

pik'unma'ayq'áal (pick-oon-ma-ike-awl) when Chinook salmon go downriver, trout go into deeper holes, and steelheads come upriver, corresponding roughly to September

qe'ciyéw'yew' (cut-see-yaw-yaw) thank you

waw'ama'ayq'áal (wow-a-ma-ike-awl) season when salmon swim to the heads of creeks, corresponding roughly to August

Cut here ✂

Membership/Mailing List: The costs of printing and postage continues to rise. The Nez Perce National Historic Trail is a non-profit organization and relies on membership fees to defray many of our expenses. We are providing this first

issue of *'Iskítpe (On the Trail)* compliments of the Foundation, but any future issues will be discontinued unless you become a member or pay the annual subscription rate. We are asking that everyone take the time now to fill out the following information to keep your name on our mailing list. Please detach at the dotted line and return to us if you would like to continue receiving information from the Foundation. Anyone who does not respond by September 30, 1999 will be taken off all of our mailing lists and will no longer receive information about the Nez Perce National Historic Trail Foundation. Please check the appropriate boxes:

Yes, I would like to become a member of the Nez Perce National Historic Trail Foundation. I will receive the quarterly newsletter, *'Iskítpe (On the Trail)*, meeting minutes and other announcements, and receive discounts on upcoming conference registration fees.

No, I do not want to become a member of the Nez Perce National Historic Trail Foundation at this time, but do want to keep my name on the mailing list.

Yearly Membership Dues:

- \$30.00 - Individual
- \$50.00 - Family
- \$100.00 - Non-Profit/Government Agency
- \$500.00 - Corporate
- \$10.00- Annual Subscription to *'Iskítpe* Only
- Other Contribution: _____

Amount Enclosed: \$ _____

Name: _____ Organization: _____

Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Fax: _____ E-Mail: _____

Mail form to: NPNHT Foundation, P.O. Box 1939, Lewiston, ID 83501

1999 - 2000 NPNHT FOUNDATION OFFICERS:

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Address Correction Requested

'Iskitpe (On the Trail)