

# Minutes for the Lewis & Clark Honor Guard

## January 12, 2015

### Call to order:

- The meeting was called to order by Darian Kath at 7:06.

### Presentation of the colors:

- None

### Members present:

- Marcia Anderson, Norman Anderson, Joe Grassesschi, Austin Haney, Hal Jorgensen, Darian Kath, Mike Staigmiller, Ron Ukrainetz, Walt Walker, Casey Wiley

### Lewis and Clark Partner:

- None

### Guest:

- None

### Minutes:

- Motion by Marcia, Second by Ron, and the minutes were approved as submitted.

### Correspondence:

- We had a bill for insurance and our bank statement

### Officers Reports:

- President: The Christmas party was judged a success. We have thank-you cards to be signed for Carol Mungas and Dick Wilmot.
- Vice President: None
- Quartermaster: The sergeant's sword and sash are returned.
- Treasurer: Our 990 report has been filed. We have \$2973.91 in checking and \$12,829.98 at Waddell and Reed. Our membership dues for 2015 now need to be paid.
- Secretary: A participation report for 2014 was submitted for members to examine. Work is underway on the stock of the 1796 Springfield. Festival meetings are occurring, but much of the 2015 festival remains up in the air— including location.

### Committee Reports:

- None

### Old Business:

- None

### New Business:

- Casey has round stock to sell, and he will sell to members first.
- The initial sign-up for the Lewis and Clark festival was passed around.
- In April, we should look at disposing of some of our iron stock.
- Jeff LaRock participated in the bicentennial of the Battle of New Orleans.
- Mary Ellen retired as of today.
- The LCIC Director has been downgraded to "Manager," and that position should be advertised by next week.

### Adjournment:

- Meeting adjourned at 8:00.

Respectfully submitted,  
Norman Anderson, secretary

## *The Grand Tour of Great Falls*

A two-day conference was held at the Civic Center on January 30<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup>. The stated purpose was to consider seeking a National Heritage Area designation for Great Falls and the surrounding area (<http://www.nps.gov/heritageareas/>). Participants from all the communities in Cascade County as well as representatives from Fort Benton were invited to attend. A National Heritage Area designation—while sponsored by the National Park Service—does not have anything to do with acquiring land for a park or wilderness area. Essentially it is a way of focusing on the heritage of a local area for the purposes of tourism and preservation. Funding for such sites is by grant and donation.

After some brief introductory remarks, Friday night was given over to Charles Flynn, the director of the Yuma (Arizona) National Heritage Area. Yuma is near the mouth of the Colorado River, but in recent decades the demand for water reduced the Colorado to virtual non-existence, and the riverbed was overgrown with salt cedar. Over the course of the past 15 or so years, Yuma has removed much of the cedar, restored a visible river presence, built parks, a new event center and created a 140 acre public area centered on the remains of the Arizona territorial prison. Flynn did not paint an easy picture, because much of their initial funding was obtained before the housing bust in 2007, but the improvements to the community are very visible and remain viable. You can see what they've been doing at <http://www.yumaheritage.com/>. He suggested that Great Falls was far ahead Yuma's position when they began the process. He further suggested that the primary focus for this area should be the Missouri River, and he suggested that the Milwaukee Depot should be our center point.

Saturday was a six-hour event that featured a remarkable presentation from Vicky Soderberg, a tourist specialist from Helena. She and a staff of four diverse people examined what kinds of amenities would encourage them to spend more than an overnight stay in a town. They then compared that list to what Great Falls has to offer. They researched what they could find from Great Falls web sites and information toward fulfilling that list. To complete the process they made a visit to Great Falls to examine signage and what opportunities existed. The results were discouraging. Our web sites don't work with each other, they are inconsistent, and there are many dead links. The Visitors' Center is invisible to anyone who enters the town on other than the 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue South exit. The Mansfield Center is known by at least four different names, and none of them appear on the building. Confusion results when a person enters Great Falls on Central Avenue, crosses the bridge, and suddenly finds himself of 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue North—without making any turns. The list is long and frustrating, but it illustrates some of the ways our community needs to work together to present a more attractive location for visitors. Her presentation struck such a chord that she has been invited back for two more presentations to different community interests.

Following her presentation, the remainder of the time was spent in brainstorming different ideas and approaches toward making Great Falls more of a destination. The results will be tabulated and eventually further meetings will be held. This is important to us as members of the Honor Guard, because we represent some of those Heritage attractions—Lewis and Clark, the river, our festival, and the Interpretive Center among others. This is not going to result in a dramatic change in Great Falls, but if the entire area begins to examine its heritage, there is a great deal that we can offer toward making Great Falls and Cascade County a destination.