Old West and Trail History
by Raymond Stites
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As we watch the time go by in all our lives, we surely must be aware also that too much of our good American history is vanishing as well. I believe many of us should feel an urgency to do all we can to change this on going loss. I've always believed for us in history of our country, have the treasure others want. They in many cases know not where to find it, and we have it, at least a little of it. Thus it appears our task to take it to them.

May I impart a bit, I've been privileged to do this spring and summer of 2012. I was asked by the NSFWA to be at the Historic Virginia Dale spring celebration and speak to them. To say the least it was a great event and attended by 850-300 people in my estimation, many very attentive listeners. Including "Mark Tovani", "Jack Abel", "Virgina his wife", and others. I spoke to a great group at 11:00 a.m. with a great interest to the crowd. My subject was high-lited to each of the families and people to take every opportunity possible to learn and acquire this history.
While it's available, and for their children and grandchildren, my subject focused on the history of the old west and that included the early pioneer wagon of all sorts, the coaches and curiously the Chuckwagons. One of the main board members, Nancy Wells, said to me later by that was one of the very good addresses they have had. In short this is what we as N.E.F.L.H historians must do. They have already invited me back for next year with my Chuckwagons. We also had a table and booth for the N.E.F.L.H and were interested, and grateful all our literature. I am certain it very special that I was asked by all the N.E.F.L.H members to represent them at this great celebration.

Another event of the season was with young people of the Sidney No Schools summer program. The first week of June I had 3-1hr session with school children, Grades 3 to 6th, telling them of the Old West history as they were preparing to learn in the summer. Their theme was the "Wild West of Nebraska". What great interest do they have. The on Aug 3 the climactic event of their program was at a park for a fun
Coof-out supper and hear an Old Cowboy Chuckwagon Cisb show them some great "History Smoke" of the West.

To begin, I sang some old cowboy songs and talked them up the trail with songs and stories of the West. Their moms & dads were there, and they got into it until they actually felt the dust from the herd, and smell the biscuits and coffee at the chuckwagon. The response was great, and I was asked to come and talk to other schools and their young people. This is of believe what we are after and it does work.

Folks the "Moms & pops" are as in need of this information as are their kids.

Thank you,
Fred Stites