



NSFWA Summer Newsletter 2011

Greetings,

It's been a few months since our last newsletter and in that time we've participated in the second **Western Vehicle Symposium at the Parks-Janeway Carriage Museum Santa Ynez, CA.** on April 7-10. Titled, ***"Rolling Through The West,"*** the event featured seven of our NSFWA directors and members either speaking or demonstrating as well as a good number of additional members attending. It was great to see such a good turnout and not only hear from authorities in various fields of study but, also experience firsthand the display and operation of some extraordinary vehicles and hitches.

The event started with a welcome reception Thursday evening at **Art Perry's Intrepid Farms.** Here members had a chance to renew old acquaintances and enjoy a beautiful selection of hors d'oeuvres and wine while touring the unique collection of western memorabilia in Mr. Perry's Intrepid collection. The cool cloudy weather did nothing to dampen the enthusiasm of the attendees.

The next day held in store for us a great round of speakers and demonstrations.

Ken Wheeling started out the morning with a great presentation and in-depth look at ***"Heavy Freighting of the High Plains - Wagons, Beasts and Their Drovers"***. Ken's knowledge on this subject is unsurpassable. He covered the evolution of the high plains freight wagon and the unique operation of these massive wagons.

Dave Hubert presented, ***"The History of the Steam Pumper in America,"*** sharing about the machines, horses and people that kept America safe. It was an amazing story, especially as it profiled how horses were often so keenly aware of the circumstances that they were as dedicated as the firemen themselves.

Michael Sanborn's "Overland Staging to California 1857-1867" presentation covered a wealth of information and knowledge related to the heavy concentration of stage coaching that took place as California developed.

Bill Twigg outlined **"Wheel Construction Through the Years."** This demonstration and talk covered some of the challenges faced by today's wheelwright and proved to be a great interactive discussion with attendees.



As the day moved on, a light drizzle began to fall and commotion from the rear of the museum grounds captured everyone's attention. Here, Dave Hubert and his crew hitched 3 horses abreast for a run around town with the steam pumper. What a magnificent site to see the pumper coming around the corner with polished brass gleaming, smoke billowing, and horse hooves chiming along with the beat of the bell. Seeing a firsthand reenactment such as this really helps our understanding as well as keeps history alive. Thanks Dave for bringing us this show.



The day ended with a walk through the museum's collection with curator John Crockett (pictured above) interpreting the rich history of this great collection of unique western vehicles including a concord coach, Henderson mud wagons, Muller sport coach, as well as several vehicles from famed east coach builder, Brewster.

Saturday:

Art Perry's *"The History of The Morgan Horse"* brought us an in-depth look at this famous breed that was so highly sought for the stagecoach and freighting industries. Today, this is one of the premier show breeds.

Patty West – Conservator *"The Conservation of The Overland Stagecoach"* On display right beside the podium was a beautifully conserved coach that Ms. West had performed her technique on. Members were very interested in this process and obviously aware of its importance in preserving the history of these rare vehicles.

Rawhide Johnson & Ashlee Ganoug *"How the Needs of America Shaped the Stagecoach"*, Ashlee pointed out how the stagecoaching of the east differed greatly in the west. Rawhide made a profound statement that "nowhere in the world did stagecoaching play such an important role in developing a nation as it did in the west".

Bobby Tanner *"Driving the Jerk Line and the 20 Mule Team"* This was a helpful prelude to the demonstration Bobby would be giving the following day. For nearly 20 years he has been researching experimenting and training to rediscover the lost art of jerk-line driving.

Doug Hansen's presentation entitled, *"Stagecoach Construction and Design,"* covered the construction techniques and design elements of the stagecoach, enabling this vehicle to perform the many tasks and duties required of it and do it so well.

The enthusiasm was obvious at the round table discussions that concluded the presentations, with the speakers fielding questions from the audience covering the many topics presented. Fun and fellowship continued at the barbeque and dance that evening.

Sunday morning was a perfect California morning, warm and sunny with the weather perfect for an outing at the Chamberlain ranch. The mule skimmers and coach drivers were busy hitching for a day of demonstrations and rides offered to the locals as a fundraiser for the museum.



Ken Wheeling and Doug Hansen provided interpretations as four mud wagon stages, filled with patrons, gave tours around the Chamberlain ranch. Bobby Tanner's 20 mules were hitched to three large ore wagons owned by the George Lane family. It was impressive to all who observed the mules, skillfully navigating the turns, jumping the chain to the outside of the turn, then back to the center as the hitch straightened out. The mules learned this process quickly. It's an amazing combination of true teamwork to see in person.

Our thanks go out to the directors of the Parks-Janeway Carriage Museum for coordinating and including us in such a truly educational, fun & friendly event.

While at Santa Ynez, the NSFVA held a general membership meeting. One of the main topics discussed was the opportunity for greater membership involvement. With so much information and so many interesting stories shared among members, we're encouraging everyone to send information to us for potential inclusion in our newsletters. Everyone has a region rich with history or perhaps a unique vehicle they'd like to profile or maybe even a reenactment participated in. If you have anything you would like to share with other members please feel free to forward it to us for review.

Finally, we also held the annual board of director's conference during the 2011 Spring meeting at Santa Ynez. While possibilities were explored for an additional 2011 event for the NSFVA in Omaha, NE, it was determined there was not sufficient time coordinate an additional quality conference. We did however develop and approve a plan that we are all very excited about. Tentatively entitled, "The Western Legacy Tour," this series of special locales and conferences will capitalize on the heart of what made and continues to reinforce such strong interest in legacy of America's push west.



(Note: Saint Louis is not our 2012 location – just a demo)

NSFWA Presents - *The Western Legacy Tour*... A Rare, Close Encounter with the People, Places and Vehicles that Built the American West

- This is a series of annual conferences that will take place in key historical locations. Starting at one of the jumping off points on the Missouri river and moving westward, annual events are being scheduled along the way.
- The Western Legacy Tour is being designed to provide a rare and exceptional look at the people, place, trails, and vehicles that built so much of America.
- This innovative chapter in America's early development is sure to make its own history by sharing a wealth of little known or previously lost historical treasures related to our nation's growth and movement west.
- We are currently making contacts and developing ideas and will keep you informed to developments. We expect to make an announcement within the next few months on the first location of the "Tour" as well as an initial list of opportunities and experiences at the event.

Also, we would like to inform our membership that we will start dispersing our Newsletter's via email starting this summer! This will allow our Board of Directors to better stay in touch with our members and also help us cut some of our costs. If you have a new email address, please let us know. However, we are aware of the members that do not use the computer and we will continue sending a hard copy Newsletter to those who specifically request it. You can reach us one of three ways: email, U.S. Mail or phone.

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