

County

Alcove Spring was favorite spot for 1800s travelers

In the past year, trail work has been done and new signs have been installed at Alcove Spring, a favorite stopping place for emigrants headed west in the 1800s.

The site is on the East River Road about half-way between Blue Rapids and Marysville in Marshall County. Signs on U.S. 77 mark the turnoffs.

Much of the recent work at the park was finished before the Ezra Meeker Celebration in August 2006, when re-enactors from the Meeker Society of Puyallup, Wash., stopped at Alcove Spring on their way to the Oregon-California Trails Association national convention in St. Joseph.

The event was captured on camera and video by enthusiasts ranging from local people to an Englishman making a movie of the how and why emigrants took the trip west.

Work at Alcove Spring last year included a new wayside exhibit on the west side of the road which highlights the nearby hay meadow where ruts from emigrant wagons can be seen today.

Members of the Alcove Spring Preservation Association have been working with the U.S. National Park Service on signs and displays to

better interpret the site for visitors.

A walking trail now connects historic sites at the park. New wayside exhibits have been installed, and the Sarah Keyes marker has been moved to its original site west of the East River Road, in the emigrant camp area.

Keyes was a member of the Donner-Reed party who died of consumption when the party was camping at Alcove Spring in 1846. She was buried there, but over the years her gravesite has been lost.

In 1950, the Daughters of the American Revolution dedicated a monument in her honor at Alcove Spring.

In 1972 Alcove Spring was the first site in Marshall County to be placed on the National Register of Historic Places. Since then 15 more sites have been listed on the register.

Alcove Spring was the object of renewed interest stirred by the sesquicentennial observance of the Oregon Trail in 1993 and has since become a park.

Special features are Naomi Pike Falls just to the north of the spring, rock carvings of names and dates by members of the 1846 Donner-Reed Party and the monument to Sarah Keyes.



EZRA MEEKER'S WAGON, (above) pulled by oxen Thor and Zeus and flanked by re-enactors, crossed swales or hollows worn into the prairie in the mid-1800s during a celebration at Alcove Spring last August. The Koester House Museum (right) was built in the 1870s.

— Photos by The Marysville Advocate



Schedule of Events

April

28—Victorian Tea, Waterville.

May

12-13—Mother's Day Weekend Flea Market and Barbecue, senior and junior high school art show, Footloose Dance Studio recital, all in Marysville.

26—Nickel Day, Waterville.

30-June 3—Wildcat Wilderness playground build in Frankfort.

June

1—Poker Run and Friday Night Cruisin', Marysville.

2—Annual car show, barbecue contest, Junior Miss program, Marysville.

7, 8 & 9—Hanover Day of '49.

9—Big Brothers Big Sisters Motorcycle Poker Run, Marysville.

9—Citywide garage sale, Waterville.

12—Pony Express reride comes through Marysville.

16—Frankfort Summerfest, White Way Car Run ending in Frankfort, Marysville Kids' Day.

24—Marysville Main Street and Koester House Museum Garden Tour.

July

3—Barbecue and fireworks, Waterville.

4—Fireworks and entertainment, Marysville.

4—Duck race, barbecue, music and fireworks, Blue Rapids.

8—Music in the Park, Waterville.

13-14—Friday the 14th Sidewalk Sale,

Marysville.

20-25—Marshall County Fair, Blue Rapids.

22—Marshall County Fair Parade, Blue Rapids.

27-29—MACT presents "Gypsy," and MACT Alumni Reunion, both in Marysville.

August

4—Axtell Harvest Fest and barbecue contest.

10-11—Citywide garage sales, Marysville.

10-11—Relay for Life, Frankfort.

18—Beattie Milo Festival.

26—Pony Express Festival, Hollenberg Station near Hanover.

September

14-16—U.S. 36 Treasure Hunt, Beattie citywide garage sales.

15-16—Kaw Valley Muzzleloaders Shooting Sport

Camp at Corndodger Park between Blue Rapids and Frankfort, (785) 617-0061.

October

20-21—Marshall County Railroad Historical Society Train Show, Blue Rapids.

26—Black Squirrel Night, Marysville.

28—Oketo Museum Potato Bake.

November

3—Country Cupboard Arts and Crafts Show, Marysville.

15—Holiday Preview, Marysville businesses.

23—Santa's Christmas Parade and Downtown Lighting, Marysville.

December

1—Dickens on Broadway, Marysville.



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