



Lewis & Clark - Spirit Mound Trust News

February 1996

National Recognition for Spirit Mound

The February issue of *We Proceeded On*, the journal of the Lewis & Clark Heritage Trail Foundation, features a color photo of Spirit Mound on its cover and contains an article about the Mound. The article tells about the history of the Mound and about the current efforts to save it from erosion and restore the half-section site to the original tallgrass prairie conditions that existed when Lewis and Clark visited it on August 25, 1804.

Lewis & Clark Meeting in Sioux City this August

The Lewis and Clark Heritage Trail Foundation, Inc. is a national organization dedicated to stimulating interest in matters relating to the Lewis and Clark expedition and to recognizing the contributions to American history made by expedition members and the events surrounding the expedition. The Foundation is holding its 1996 annual meeting in Sioux City, Iowa on August 4-7. The Spirit Mound Trust will have a display table at the meeting during their registration and reception period on August 4 and a post-meeting bus tour August 8 will include a stop at Spirit Mound. For more information, the Foundation's address is P.O. Box 3434, Great Falls, MT 59403.

1995 Transportation Enhancement Grant Application

The Trust applied to the State of South Dakota for a \$250,000 'transportation enhancement' grant in February of last year. The grant funds were to be matched by \$62,500 made up of private donations and pledges and a short-term loan. The total of \$312,500 was to be used to purchase most of the 320 acre Spirit Mound site. First Dakota National Bank in Vermillion and the South Dakota Chapter of the Nature Conservancy both offered to loan the Trust the balance of the required match. The loan would be repaid by income from farmland on the site before the prairie restoration was completed.

The grant schedule originally would have had the grants receiving preliminary approval in the spring and final distribution in the fall of 1995. Although the State is required to make these federal funds available for a variety of projects, including acquisition and preservation of scenic or historic sites, the grant process was put on hold last summer and is still under review as of late February, 1996. It is unclear when the allocation from the 1995 process will occur, and whether or not there will be a 1996 round of grants. If the Lewis & Clark - Spirit Mound Trust is not awarded a grant through the '95 process, but is still eligible for a '96 grant if they are available, the Trust will resubmit it's application.

For those of you who made pledges last year contingent on the approval of the grant, the Trust would like to continue to include these as available funds for either last year's grant, if we receive a grant, or for a future transportation enhancement grant, if one occurs. However, given the uncertainty and the unexpected amount of time that has passed since the grant application, if anyone wishes to cancel their pledge, they are free to do so. In any event, the Trust sincerely thanks everyone that made a pledge or donation in response to the request early last year.

National Park Service Grant

The Trust has received a \$2,500 National Park Service grant to develop and print a presentation document describing the significance of Spirit Mound and the goals of the project. Some technical assistance may be available from NPS and it is our plan to have the brochure available in time for the Lewis and Clark Heritage Trail Foundation's Sioux City convention next August.

South Dakota's Lewis & Clark Bicentennial Commission Canceled

Planning began in 1994 for a state commission to coordinate celebration of the expedition's bicentennial in 2004 - 2006 and Trust members attended an initial meeting in Pierre, along with state staff and representatives from other communities along the Lewis and Clark Trail. In 1995 the State changed its approach and now will depend on local community efforts to commemorate the bicentennial. This is part of a state effort to reduce the number of ad hoc committees and commissions.

Presentation Made at South Dakota Historical Society Annual Meeting

The South Dakota Historical Society asked Larry Monfore to speak at its 1995 annual meeting. He traveled to Pierre in March and gave a talk about the history of the Mound and about the status of the project and the long-term goals of the Lewis & Clark - Spirit Mound Trust.

Spirit Mound Wildlife Conservation Recognized by Conservation District

The Clay County Conservation District gave Charles Wetmore and his son, Mark, the 1995 District Wildlife Cooperator of the Year award for their efforts at rehabilitating a five acre prairie remnant that they own on the western slope of Spirit Mound. The Wetmores have cataloged the native species growing on the patch and are trying to encourage a return to a natural tallgrass prairie, with the help of the Nature Conservancy and Conservation District staff.

Spirit Mound Display in Sioux City Visitor Center

A framed print of the painting *Lewis and Clark's Spirit Mound* by Ron Backer is mounted, along with an explanation of the Mound, in the Corps of Engineers river inspection vessel *Sergeant Floyd*, that serves as the Sioux City Visitors' Center along the river front near Interstate 29.

Spirit Mound Run

The run between the Mound and Cotton Park in Vermillion, which has been held for several years, was at least temporarily discontinued in 1995. There have been some discussions about starting a Spirit Mound Marathon, perhaps to be held on August 25, the day the expedition visited the Mound, but the effort would be a fairly major undertaking and the idea awaits a group of dedicated runners to get it started.

Spirit Mound Prints & Postcards

Some copies of the 500 original limited edition prints of the painting *Lewis & Clark's Spirit Mound* are still available. These prints (overall 22" x 25", image size 17" x 20") can be purchased for \$50. Also available are 4" x 6" postcards of the Mound for \$1 each. The prints and postcards are available postpaid from the Trust, or they can be purchased in Vermillion at either Davis Drug or USD Book & Supply.

New Address for the Trust

In the past the Trust had its mail sent in care of the South Dakota Office of Historical Preservation in Vermillion. During 1995 a state government reorganization moved that office to Pierre. The Trust now has its own post office box, number 603 in Vermillion.

Membership Dues... are due again

Membership in the Lewis & Clark-Spirit Mound Trust is still \$10 per year. The membership is on a calendar-year basis, with all memberships coming due January 1. The Trust is a tax exempt 501(c)(3) organization, (No. 93-0921345); all dues and contributions are tax deductible. Unless we are successful at securing grants for specific projects, the Trust's only source of income is dues and contributions and the sale of the prints and cards. Please continue your support of the effort to save this unique historic and natural resource.

Lewis and Clark - Spirit Mound Trust
P.O. Box 603
Vermillion, SD 57069

Larry Monfore, President
phone 605-624-2790

