
◇ FRIENDS News ◇

Volume 1, Issue 1

Friends of the Little Bighorn Battlefield National Monument, Montana

Fall 1999

Welcome! A New Era Begins

By Rick Meyer
President

On behalf of the Board of Directors, welcome to the premier edition of Friends NEWS. While the bulk of our membership has joined us in the last few months, many of you have waited for our newsletter for quite some time. To our early supporters thank you for your patience and to our new members thank you for joining us.

Friends began with the realization that there was a place for those of us who wanted to directly support the Battlefield free of contemporary politics and acrimony. Former Superintendent Gerard Baker agreed with the premise and was kind enough to explore the possibilities with me. We looked at several options, including subdivisions of existing groups and associations, and concluded that a fresh approach was needed.

Together we established a number of criteria that, if met, would justify consideration of forming a new group.

First, build a foundation of strength by including people with a wide variety of cultural, economic, educational backgrounds. Second, place an effective Board of Directors. Third, commit to an organization that provides financial and "hands on" volunteer support of the mission and goals of the Monument.

Today we enjoy the cooperation of many talented individuals from around the country.

Included are representatives from the traditional

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Cheyennes Honored With Markers

By Carrie McCleary
Independent Writer

Although the wheels of bureaucracy have turned excruciatingly slow, time was on the side of Cheyenne tribal members who have worked with National Park Service personnel to create markers for

the sites where two Cheyennes fell at the Battle of the Little Bighorn.

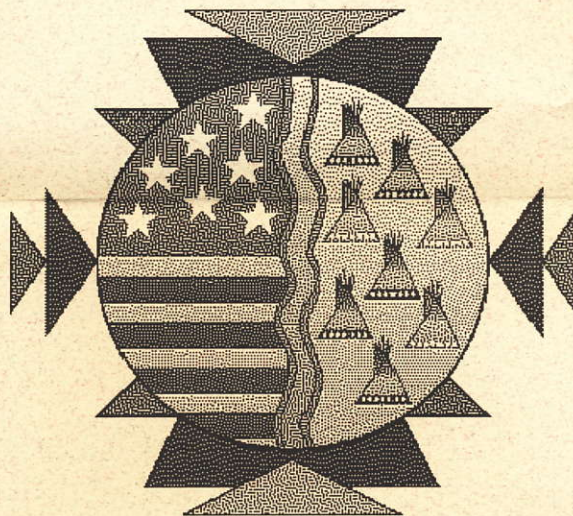
As of Memorial Day 1999 two red granite markers identify the site where Cheyenne warrior Noisy Walking and Cheyenne leader Lame Whiteman fell on Battle Ridge just one half-mile from where General George Armstrong Custer fell.

Lame Whiteman is noted for having led a charge on the Seventh Cavalry. The leader's daughter, Nellie, was at the battle and in 1925 she, then Mrs. Thomas [Nellie] Beaverheart, wrote the

superintendent at then Custer Battlefield, asking that a marker be placed on the site where her father, Vehoehnenehe-Lame Whiteman, fell.

Two hundred and fifty three white marble markers indicate where Seventh Cavalry soldiers fell that fate-full day in June 1876 but until Memorial Day no markers existed for the fallen victors of the battle.

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To our Members

Thank You!

Pila Maya Yelo

CRAZIE!

AHO!

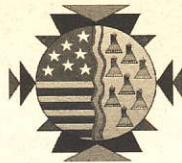
¡GRACIAS!
 MAAH-ZAH-GETOS

Merci!

Danke Schön

NEWS is published quarterly by Friends of the Little Bighorn Inc. for members and their families. News and story ideas are always welcome.

Friends of the Little Bighorn:
 Post Office Box 1436 Cody, WY 82414.



From the Desk of the Superintendent

By Neil Mangum

It is with extreme pleasure that I address the membership of the Friends of the Little Bighorn, Incorporated. As most of you know a Memorandum of Agreement between the Friends and Little

“Being a member of the Friends offers a first-hand chance for members to interact directly with the battlefield.”

Bighorn Battlefield has been signed. At the very cornerstone of this historic document is a commitment to the principles of furthering the mission of the National Park Service--to preserve, conserve, and interpret the cultural and natural features that comprise the battle of the Little Bighorn.

In the coming months and years, we look forward to a fruitful partnership with the Friends in meeting the diverse challenges that confront the battlefield.

While fundraising is important and represents one of the primary purposes of the Friends, it is not the most significant. Being a member of the Friends offers a first-hand chance for members to interact directly with the battlefield. Opportunities will exist for membership involvement with the battlefield such as volunteering to serve as guides or interact with park personnel on resource management and preservation projects, or publicizing important issues. I would like to say thank you, and particularly Friends President Rick Meyer, for your support.

For those readers who have not joined Friends, I urge you to join up and become actively involved. You will be glad you did. ▲

Neil Mangum has been with the National Park Service for 29 years including ten years as historian at the Battlefield from 1979 to 1988.

He is the author of “Battle of the Rosebud: Prelude to the Little Bighorn.”

Neil was also instrumental in the establishment of Washita National Historic Site in Oklahoma.

Welcome...

(Continued from page 1)

“gateway” communities of the Battlefield as well as the Crow, Northern Cheyenne, and Lakota nations. I am proud to say that many of these dedicated individuals now serve on the Board of Directors and Advisory Board you see on page 2. By signing a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) our commitment, and recognition as the support group of the Battlefield, became official.

With the legalities and formalities behind us, Superintendent Mangum has provided Friends a number of opportunities to learn about the challenges and rewards of managing the Monument and interpreting the Battle of the Little Bighorn for the public. The ways we can help are virtually limitless. Some projects will require years to plan and complete. Others do not even require fund raising but simply result from people seeing a need and asking how they can help. These projects, and how you can help, will be detailed in future editions of Friends NEWS. Any donation, be it time or money, is a gesture of affection for the Battlefield and a membership gift of any amount can make a difference.

My heartfelt thanks go out to a number of key individuals without whom Friends could not have gotten off the ground. To Former Superintendent Gerard Baker and Mr. Joseph Marshall III whose friendships I treasure and whose great strength and wisdom are surpassed only by their generosity. To Superintendent Neil Mangum who made the

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Markers...

(Continued from page 1)

In her 1925 letter she said she hoped the site might be remembered on the next anniversary of the battle. Her great-granddaughter Margie Hart Shoulderblade came to help commemorate the placing of the marker last month.

Shoulderblade, who lives on the Northern Cheyenne Reservation just 20 miles from the Battle of the Little Bighorn site, came to the ceremony with her two daughters and grandson Seth Currier.

Shoulderblade said the unveiling of the markers was a special day for her family and that she was glad to be there. She said she remembered her grandparents discussing the battle when she was young.

Shoulderblade said the placing of the marker has created a full-circle for her family.

Little Bighorn Battlefield Superintendent Neil Mangum said the park plans to erect more markers for fallen warriors in the future. “We want to take our time and get the sites right,” he said. “We will be contacting the tribes and the families [of those fallen].”

Cheyenne elder Clifford Long Sioux said he and other veterans began working on the marker project in 1990 when Barbara Suteer was the superintendent at the park. “Barbara kind of opened everything. Then Gerard Baker came and he worked on it,” he said. “And then Neil Mangum came and he pushed it through.” Mangum

(Continued on page 5)

“Barbara Suteer kind of opened everything. Then Gerard Baker came and he worked on it,” “And then Neil Mangum came and he pushed it through.”

Letters

Dear Rick:

Thanks for the letter informing me of our organization's progress in "fulfilling our commitment to aid educational, historical, and cultural programs for the benefit of the Monument staff and the traveling public."

"I am heartened to know that racial differences have ceased to intrude on public lands hallowed by past historical events."

I am pleased to learn of our efforts to assist Superintendent Neil Mangum on presenting a balanced history of the Little Bighorn Battlefield National Monument. As a concerned tax-paying American Indian citizen, I am heartened to know that racial differences have ceased to intrude on public lands hallowed by past historical events. I envision the Greasy Grass as being a national showcase

to enlighten the public's awareness of our history, and as a national park that has overcome the burden of past divisiveness and set new standards for other national parks to follow.

Also, please accept my thanks and congratulations for all of the effort and resources you have personally expended in bringing our organization into existence. With your selfless attention to detail, the national park system has gained an ally in providing outstanding service to the public.

Tahunska Tanka

Leonard R. Bruguier, Ph.D.
Director, Institute of American
Indian Studies
University of South Dakota
Chairman, Indian Memorial
Committee

Markers...

(Continued from page 4)

said the markers were not set before for a number of reasons, one of them money.

"I said it's a good idea, 'let's do it,'" Mangum said. "I saw it as the natural thing to do."

Mangum said the Indian Memorial, which began its planning stages in 1991, should break ground this fall if fund-raising for the memorial goes well. The \$2 million project will commemorate all Native Americans who fought at the Battle of the Little Bighorn.

Long Sioux said he sees a connection between the placement of the markers and the Indian Memorial. And looks forward to the ground-breaking of the memorial.

"We need peace here [at the battlefield]. Let's forget about the fighting, let's move forward," he said. "But let's not forget about the history. Let this be the where we start our friendship." ▲

Welcome...

(Continued from page 4)

signing of the MOA one of his first official acts as superintendent cementing a relationship of cooperation and trust.

To fellow Board members Bob Reece and Valerie Zeeb who worked tirelessly, from the very beginning, to build a strong organization. To Mr. Clifford Long Sioux, elder of the Northern Cheyenne nation, who has patiently led me down the path of peace through unity. And to our partners in supporting the monument, Southwest Parks and Monuments and the National Park Foundation.

And finally to our members. Thank You. Your generosity has gotten Friends off to a great start! ▲

artiFACTS

- ✓ Superintendent Neil Mangum celebrates his 30th year with the National Park Service in December.
- ✓ Mr. John Cook will be retiring from his Region Directors post on September 3rd.
- ✓ Our Thanks go out to Mr. John Potter of Billings, Montana who generously donated our Friends logo.
- ✓ Chief of Interpretation Ken Woody, has honored us by placing a Friends membership form in the newspaper that goes into the hands of each visitor to the Monument.
- ✓ The Environmental Assessment for the Deep Ravine and Keogh/Crazy Horse trails has been completed. The trails will be open daily through Labor Day.
- ✓ The Indian Memorial project continues to move forward. The assessment of the 95% Construction Documents is complete. Next up is to enter into the fundraising campaign. Although still tentative at this date, hope to break ground in the fall with construction in 2000.
- ✓ Anyone interested in donating to the Indian Memorial may send a check made payable to the Indian Memorial Fund care of Little Bighorn Battlefield National Monument, P.O. 39, Crow Agency, Montana 59022.
- ✓ Friends Secretary/Treasurer Bob Reece and member John Newcomb are serving on the National Park Foundation task force charged with formulating plans for raising funds for the Indian Memorial.
- ✓ Book sales through the park's cooperating association, Southwest Parks and Monuments Association (SWPMA), are ahead of last year's pace.
- ✓ Friends members are reminded that buying your battle related publications through the Battlefield bookstore directly benefits the monument. SWPMA book list is available upon request by calling SWPMA at 406.638.2465 or writing to PO Box 190, Crow Agency, MT 59022
- ✓ The asbestos has been removed from the ceiling of the visitor center, which clears the way to expand the book sales/display area and construct new restrooms out on the traffic island.
- ✓ The park continues to work on its new orientation film. Some filming has already taken place. The film should be available for viewing sometime in early fall.
- ✓ Historian John Doerner has been working on the wayside exhibit project. Plans are to produce 18 exhibits along the tour road. It now appears that the waysides will not be installed until late summer or fall.

**Please accept
this invitation
to join the
Friends of the
Little Bighorn.**

The Friends goal
is to educate the public to
a better understanding and
appreciation of
Little Bighorn Battlefield
National Monument and
what it represents in terms of
our historical and cultural heritage.



YES! I want to help

educate people about the historical and cultural significance
of the Battle of the Little Bighorn
and help to preserve Little Bighorn Battlefield
National Monument.

Please enroll me as a member of

Friends of the Little Bighorn Inc.

Renewing Joining for the first time

Dr. _____
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Annual Dues:

Associate.....\$15 Patron.....\$100
Contributing...\$25 Sponsor... \$250
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In This Issue...

Premier Edition of the FRIENDS News!

**Never doubt that a small group of
thoughtful, committed citizens can
change the world.
Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.**

Margaret Mead