



September-October 2017

# **ZOOM** in on america

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## **LEWIS, CLARK AND WESTWARD EXPANSION**



*Lewis and Clark at Three Forks," Edgar Samuel Paxson (1852-1919), 1912, Montana State Capital*

**In this issue: Lewis & Clark Explore the American West**

**Zoom in on America**



## When I traveled West ...

When I moved to the west coast of America 16 years ago, I was absolutely stunned by the beauty of the landscape. I can only imagine the reactions of the explorers in Lewis and Clark's famous expedition, when they finally encountered the Pacific Ocean after traveling westward for so long. The reward of watching their first gorgeous sunset on the Pacific Ocean must have felt tremendous. Today, from San Diego to Seattle, we still marvel at the sublime essence of America's west coast, and to be among the first explorers to cross half of the continent it must have been special indeed.

*Walter Braunoehler, Consul General in Krakow*



Omaha is a city of approximately half a million residents located along the Missouri River on the eastern edge of the Midwestern state of Nebraska, overlooking Council Bluffs, Iowa. The American explorers Meriwether Lewis and William Clark passed through this area back in July of 1804 when they first encountered the Native American tribe called the Omaha on their journey towards the Pacific. Today Omaha is the largest city in Nebraska and home to the headquarters of several large American corporations such as Kiewit, Mutual of Omaha, Union Pacific, and ConAgra. Warren Buffet, one of the richest people in the world, started his successful business Berkshire Hathaway in Omaha and still lives there today. At the crossroads of America, Omaha has always been a hub of transportation, agriculture and food production. The concept of "TV dinners", cake mixes, Raisin Bran, and the Reuben sandwich were all first developed in Omaha.

*Paula Walker, Vice-Consul in Krakow*



*(AP Photo)*

I was driving westward on Interstate 64 towards St. Louis and was very excited. I had seen the Mississippi only once before, but it was a brief visit that I didn't remember very well. This time was more than a visit; I was moving from Florida to St. Louis. As I approached the Illinois border, I could see the Gateway Arch, designed by Finnish architect Eero Saarinen in 1947. Strangely, the river didn't seem as wide as I had remembered. In fact, the Poplar Street bridge, which I-64 uses to cross the Mississippi, is only 2,164 feet long (660 meters), and some of that spans land. Further south, the river is much wider.

Over the next several months, I frequently visited the park around the arch (the Jefferson National Expansion Memorial) and walked along the river. Occasionally a historic-

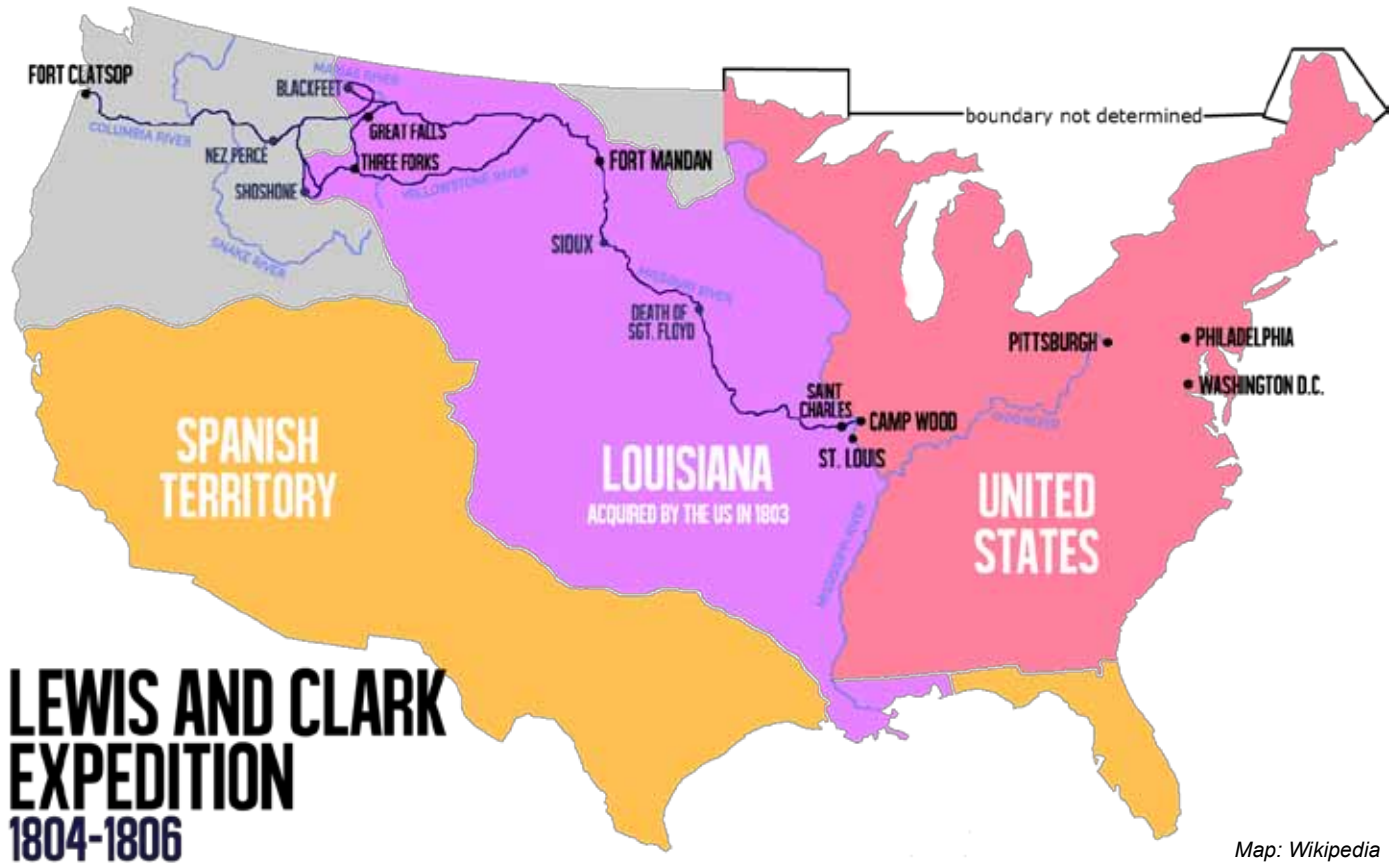


style paddle boat would pass by, but shipping barges were more common. Sometimes I went inside the arch to see the exhibit about the arch's construction. The photographs showed how dangerous the work was, yet no workers were killed. Getting to the top of the arch involved taking a small elevator pod that looked like something from a science fiction story. The elevator moved through a curved tunnel up the arch to reach the viewing area at the top. On a windy day, I could feel the arch slightly swaying. The view to the east and west underscores how much the St. Louis metro area had changed since 1804. The Mississippi and the Gateway Arch quickly became one of my favorite places to spend time. You can learn more facts about the Mississippi through the National Park Service. There are national parks and memorials along the river in multiple states.

*Marya Fancey, Fulbright Scholar in Krakow*

# The Corps of Discovery Epic Expedition

If traveling West in today's America - where every hill, mountain, creek and valley has been measured, photographed and inspected by scientists - can arouse admiration, let us imagine what it must have been like for the explorers 200 years ago, when there were no maps, no towns or cities, and nothing disturbed the silence of the primeval landscape. When William Clark saw the Pacific Ocean shore, now Cannon Beach in Oregon, and looked at Haystack Rock on January 8, 1806, he wrote in his diary: "...from this point I beheld the grandest and most pleasing prospects which my eyes ever surveyed, in my front a boundless Ocean, [...] the niches and points of high land which forms this Corse for a long ways aded to the inoumerable rocks of emence Sise out at a great distance from the Shore and against which the Seas brak with great force gives this Coast a most romantic appearance."



## How It Came About

The beginning of the 19th century marks an important acquisition the United States made by purchasing for \$15 million the Louisiana Territory from France. A huge area of over 800,000 square miles, now including 15 states, had been poorly explored. Planning future economic development of the territory, President Thomas Jefferson hoped that the expedition would find a water route linking the Columbia and Missouri rivers that would enable American traders to ship their goods north and then west to the Pacific Ocean. Maps of the newly acquired territories, as well as descriptions of the natural world, were needed. But most of all President Jefferson wanted to manifest the American ownership of the territory and establish friendly relations with the Indian tribes inhabiting the land.

## The Beginning

Even though the most famous American inland expedition, named the Corps of Discovery officially started on May 14, 1804, the preparations began much earlier. Already in December 1803 the Corps of Discovery reached the junction of the Mississippi and Missouri Rivers and established

the Camp River Dubois, which was a military winter camp. The expedition members had inspections, marched, stood guard, hunted and prepared supplies for the journey. Sergeant John Ordway was in charge of the camp when Lewis and Clark were away. Alongside the leaders, he also wrote a diary, which is now a great source for recreating the expedition daily life.

## Members of the Expedition

The Corps of Discovery consisted of several dozen people who were led by Meriwether Lewis, Jefferson's private secretary, who was appointed the leader by the President. He recruited William Clark, his friend from the military service and a Virginian compatriot, to accompany him as the co-leader. On board as an interpreter was Toussaint Charbonneau, a French Canadian fur trader and his two captive Shoshone Indian "wives". One of them, Sacagawea, proved invaluable for the expedition and served as an interpreter as well as occasionally as a guide. Another important member of the expedition was York, Clark's African-American slave, who experienced freedom during the expedition and may have been freed by Clark after his good service on the journey, though this is not confirmed.

## Multitasked Lewis and Clark

Lewis and Clark had received scientific training to cope with the tasks that awaited them on the journey: draw maps, determine their position and direction by means of celestial observation, and use scientific instruments available at the time such as the octant, chronometer, sextant and compass. Using some of these instruments required long and tiresome upkeep, for example a chronometer (or clock) had to be wound each day at noon, which must have been a nuisance for the travelers on their arduous journey.

### From soldiers to diplomats

An equally demanding task was to gather and store information about the fauna and flora of the territories traversed. And so the two men, educated in the soldiers' profession, had to become experts in natural sciences, navigation, organization and diplomacy, which was indeed of utmost importance during this expedition. The lives of the ninety members of the Corps of Discovery depended on their leaders' skill to introduce themselves and present the goal of their mission to the Indian tribes, through whose territories they were passing.

### You live in the United States

One of its goals was to inform the Indians that the whole territory had passed from the French into the American hands. Lewis and Clark had with them American flags and Jefferson medals depicting two hands clasped in friendship. These were offered to the chiefs as presents.

## Indebted to Nez Perce

The Indians were friendly. Indeed, at the time of a crisis, when the group was exhausted and starving while crossing the Lolo Trail in the Bitterroot Mountains (Idaho), the Nez Perce Indians saved the explorers' lives by giving them food and shelter, and when the travelers had to leave their horses behind, they cared for the animals until they returned from the Pacific shores, where they spent the winter of 1805.

### One of the Greatest Achievements

One of the most spectacular achievements of the expedition was crossing the Continental Divide of the Rocky Mountains - the pass in the Bitterroot Mountains. The pass separates Lemhi County, Idaho and Beaverhead County, Montana. Lewis and Clark were the first Americans to journey into the lands which were claimed by various European powers, and continued on their way to the Pacific Ocean.

### The Outcome

The explorers brought back maps, journals and materials for scientific analysis. White discovery of the American West was a breakthrough - the beginning of colonization of the region west of the Mississippi River. It had a profound influence on the situation of the native inhabitants of the area, who were slowly and steadily pushed out of their territories.



Above: A leech basin and other bloodletting instruments, taken by Meriwether Lewis and William Clark brought on their expedition to the West, are on display Wednesday, February 12, 2003, at the College of Physicians of Philadelphia's exhibit entitled "Only One Man Died: Medical Adventures on the Lewis and Clark Trail." (AP Photo/Mark Stehle)

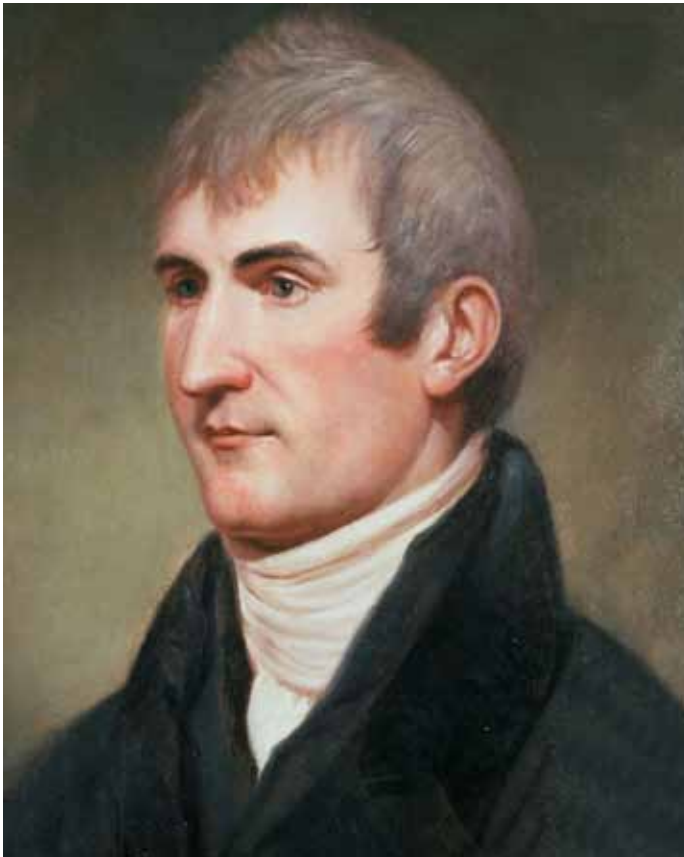
Left: A small pocket compass from the collection of Peyton C. "Bud" Clark, is one of many items similar to ones used by Meriwether Lewis and William Clark, displayed in the exhibit "Lewis & Clark: Imagining the Expedition from St. Louis," at the Gateway Arch Museum of Westward Expansion in St. Louis, December 11, 2003. (AP Photo/Stephanie S. Cordle)



## LEWIS, CLARK, SACAGAWEA and ...

Let's have a look at the three best-known people connected with the epic expedition of 1804-1806 and at one more very special member of this group.

Meriwether Lewis (August 18, 1774 – October 11, 1809) is remembered primarily as an explorer, but he was also a soldier, politician, and public administrator. Meriwether Lewis was born in Albemarle County, Colony of Virginia, (now Ivy community). His father, Lt. William Lewis was of Welsh ancestry, and his mother, Lucy Meriwether had English roots. After his father died of pneumonia, he moved with his mother and stepfather Captain John Marks to Georgia.



William Clark was born on August 1, 1770 in a family of planters in Virginia, who had a few estates and a few slaves. After the American Revolutionary War (1775-1783), the family moved to Kentucky where they bought a plantation near Louisville. He joined a voluntary militia force that fought the Northwest Indian War against American Indians, who were trying to preserve their territory north of the Ohio River. After the Northwest Indian War finished in 1795 he was sent on a mission to Missouri from which he resigned



Lewis developed an interest in natural history at an early age, an interest encouraged by his mother who taught him how to gather wild herbs for medicinal purposes. For a career he joined the Virginia militia first and later, in 1795, the U.S. Army. It was in the military service that he got to know William Clark. On April 1, 1801, Lewis was appointed as an aide by President Thomas Jefferson, whom he knew through Virginia society in Albemarle County. His duty was to compile information about the personnel and politics of the U.S. Army as well as meet with prominent figures in politics, and the arts. President Jefferson chose Lewis to lead the expedition and Lewis recruited a 33-year-old Clark to share command of the expedition. Afterwards Lewis was named the governor of Louisiana Territory. Most of his life Lewis suffered from "melancholia" or depression. He died a sudden and mysterious death in an inn during a trip to Washington on October 11, 1809. Some believe he committed suicide, while some think he died by the hands of an assassin. He was buried at the site, 60 miles south of Nashville.

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*Meriwether Lewis and William Clark. Photo: Wikipedia*  
the following year and returned to his family plantation. At the age of 33 he was recruited by Meriwether Lewis to share command of the newly formed Corps of Discovery. On the mission Clark concentrated on the drawing of maps, managed supplies, wrote a diary and hunted for game. After the expedition, he was appointed the brigadier general of the militia in the Louisiana Territory and the US agent for Indian affairs. He served the US government as diplomat to the Native American peoples. His approach to Indian affairs was peculiar. On the one hand he rid Native Americans of their ancestral lands and on the other, tried to protect them and preserve their culture. In 1813 he was appointed the governor of the Missouri Territory. He was in charge of Indian Affairs west of the Mississippi, and was based in St. Louis. Many Indian people called that city "Redhead's Town", an allusion to Clark's red hair. He died on September 1, 1838 in Saint Louis, Missouri.

Sacagawea was born c. 1788 into the Salmon Eater or Agaidika tribe of Lemhi Shoshone near the Continental Divide at the present day border between Idaho and Montana. Her real name was Boinaiv, but when she was about 12 she was captured by a Hidasta raiding party and taken to their village near present-day Bismarck in North Dakota. She was given a new name - Sacagawea (also spelled Sacajawea or Sakakawea), which might be translated as "Bird Woman". Later she was purchased by French Canadian fur trader Toussaint Charbonneau and became one of his wives. Soon after that, explorers Meriwether Lewis and William Clark hired Charbonneau as an interpreter for their expedition to the Pacific Ocean.

Sacagawea was pregnant at that time, but she also joined the expedition as Clark knew that having an Indian woman among the party would be a sign of the explorers' friendly intentions. He said: *"The Wife of Shabono our interpreter We find reconciles all the Indians, as to our friendly intentions. A woman with a party of men is a token of peace."*

Sacagawea traveled thousands of miles from the Mandan-Hidasta villages in the Dakotas to the Pacific Northwest from 1804 to 1806. As a speaker of Shoshone, she communicated with the tribe to acquire horses for the expedition and to cross the mountains. William Clark named one of the rivers they crossed after her. Sacagawea helped the expedition in many other ways, such as by finding edible plants, making clothes and moccasins, and safeguarding the passage of the expedition through Indian territories. It

is believed that Sacagawea died on December 20, 1812 in Fort Manuel, on the Missouri River.

There is perhaps one more hero who was an integral part of the expedition. This is Jean Baptiste Charbonneau, Sacagawea's son who was born on route the journey. Many years after the expedition William Clark took care of the young Charbonneau and paid for his education. Jean Baptiste toured Europe, learned several languages and lived in a castle of Duke Friedrich Paul Wilhelm of Württemberg. He worked as a trapper, a gold miner, a scout and an interpreter. Charbonneau, died at age 61 at a ranch in Oregon.



A 1905 statue of Sacagawea by sculptor Alice Cooper stands in Washington Park in Portland, Oregon. It depicts the famous Lewis and Clark guide pointing west and carrying her son, Jean Baptiste Charbonneau. (AP Photo/Don Ryan)



Camille George, left, her daughter Rose Ann Abrahamson, center, and granddaughter Leela Abrahamson pose in the Lemhi Valley near Salmon, Idaho, October 26, 2002. The Shoshone women trace their ancestry directly to Chief Cameahwait, brother of Sacajawea, who helped the Lewis and Clark Expedition at a critical point. (AP Photo/Mark Duncan)

# ACTIVITY PAGE

September-October  
2017

## TRIVIA QUESTION

Who were the leaders of  
the Corps of Discovery?

Send the answer  
(with your home address) to:  
KrakowAIRC@state.gov

The 2nd, the 7th and the 8th  
correct answer will be award-  
ed with a book prize

Deadline: November 30

July-August 2017

Answer:

Jacqueline Kennedy

The winner is:

Ewelina from Tarnow, Irena  
from Brodnica and Justyna  
from Staszow

CONGRATULATIONS!!!

The prize will be sent to you  
by mail.



Zoom is online at  
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## EXERCISE 1

Scan the article on p. 2 where 3 people share their memories of going west. Who describes the following experiences: Walter, Paula or Marya?

1. I had seen the Mississippi only once before.
2. Today Omaha is the largest city in Nebraska and home to the headquarters of several large American corporations...
3. I can only imagine the reactions of the explorers in Lewis and Clark's famous expedition, when they finally encountered the Pacific Ocean...
4. I frequently visited the park around the arch.
5. The Mississippi and the Gateway Arch quickly became one of my favorite places to spend time.

## EXERCISE 2

True or False:

1. The Louisiana territory was bought for \$10 million.
2. One of the main goals of the expedition was to find a water route linking the Columbia and Missouri rivers.
3. Camp Wood and Camp Dubois are the English and French names of the same camp on the east side of the Mississippi River.
4. William Clark was the main leader of the expedition.

## USEFUL Links:

- National Park Service: <https://www.nps.gov/index.htm>
- Facts about Mississippi: <https://www.nps.gov/miss/riverfacts.htm>
- Jefferson: <https://www.nps.gov/jeff/index.htm>

## DON'T MISS THIS EXHIBIT IN KRAKOW

The exhibit is shown until December 31, 2017 at  
the Jagiellonian University Museum Collegium Maius

**“Road to the Unknown... Tracing Lewis and Clark’s Historic Expedition across the Western United States”**



Walter Braunohler Consul General opens the exhibit.



Adam Piekarski, author of the exhibit, at the opening.





*The Gateway Arch is reflected in one of the pools on the grounds of the Jefferson National Expansion Memorial, on its 40th birthday, Friday, October 28, 2005, in St. Louis. The Arch, designed as a tribute to westward expansion, was the creation of architect Eero Saarinen.  
(AP Photo/Tom Gannam)*