

The **BULB HORN**

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The Touring Club
www.vsmcca.org



THE PURPOSE OF THE VMCCA IS TO PROMOTE TOURING AND ENJOYMENT OF VINTAGE VEHICLES THROUGH
THE ACQUISITION, PRESERVATION, AND EXHIBITION OF ALL VINTAGE AND HISTORICALLY SIGNIFICANT
VEHICLES AND ASSOCIATED MATERIALS.

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Front cover: Mike and Mary Johnston drive down the road in their 1940 Ford Special Deluxe Coupe during the 2025 Lewis and Clark Tour. They purchased it in 2010. (Photo by Ray Maxfield)

Inside front cover: Charlie and Ardie Froehlich's 1937 Ford Pick-up Truck. (Photo by Tracy Leshner)

Back cover: Chester and Nancy Bradfield's 1936 Studebaker President at the Mount Tabor Park in Thurmont, Maryland, during the 2024 Revival AAA Glidden Tour®. (Photo by Tracy Leshner)



A Scene From the 2025 Lewis and Clark Tour



Photo by Bob Murray



Crossroads: Lewis and Clark at the Three Forks

By Holly Crawley

On June 8, 2025, eight years after beginning the 2,500-mile cross-country odyssey at the Falls of the Ohio and following Lewis and Clark to the Pacific, over 80 VMCCA members in their various faithful steeds met in Three Forks, Montana, to explore and view several of the many sites recorded in the Lewis and Clark Journals. "And it is but justice to say that Mssrs. Lewis and Clark, and their brave companions, have by this arduous service deserved well of their country." —President Thomas Jefferson's Sixth Annual Message, December 2, 1806.

Yes, this regional tour would be the last of the eight VMCCA Lewis and Clark Trail tours. A hub tour based in Three Forks, Montana, where on July 25, 1805, the Corps of Discovery finally reached the headwaters of the Missouri River as they headed west, and where they separated on their way east a year later. Here, based at the historic Sacajawea Hotel, we began our last tour with a delicious dinner on the deck, followed by Norman Anderson speaking on the Lewis and Clark area history that we would explore over the following days. Tour co-chair Judy Johnson's favorite ice cream, huckleberry, topped off a delicious dinner of barbecued bison ribs. Who knew buffalo could be so tasty?

Our touring began in search of horses, just as Lewis and Clark were, "For without horses we shall be obliged to leave a great part of our stores, of which, it appears to me that we have a stock already sufficiently small for the length of the voyage before us." —Lewis, August 8, 1805.

We viewed sculptor Jim Doland's Bleu Horses at the beginning of our adventures.



Lewis and Clark Tour cars parked around the Sacajawea Hotel in Three Forks, Montana.

Then the group drove along the Missouri River, stopping at Yorks Islands and Crimson Bluffs, both of which were noted and named by Meriwether Lewis in 1805 as the Corps traveled along the river.

Some of Jim Doland's Bleu Horse statues.





Lewis and Clark tourists view the Gates of the Mountains.

In order to view the Gates of the Mountains from the water as the Corps did, we took an entertaining narrated tour on the Missouri. The "Gates of the Rocky Mountains," named by Lewis in 1805, are now known as the Gates of the Mountains.

The weather continued to be warm and dry as we left Lewis and Clark's trail for the day and drove northwest to Deer Lodge,

where we spent a fun-filled morning touring the Old Montana Prison and a vast, well-maintained car museum. VMCCA tours often visit car museums to ooh and ahh, but this is the first one we've found that is attached to a former prison. I'm sure there is a connection there!

This group discovered many reasons why we were glad that we weren't incarcerated in the Old Montana Prison. Our docent-led tour was fascinating and entertaining.

Left to right: The riverboat guide with VMCCA tour co-guides Holly Crawley, Judy Johnson, Bob Crawley, and Jim Johnson.



After eating a box lunch in Deer Lodge at the park across the street from the prison and car museum, we drove through historic downtown Butte to enjoy the buildings that were modern when our cars were new! Or maybe before our cars were new! Or before we were new? We had the opportunity to view the Berkeley Pit on the way out of town. The pit mine was opened in 1955 and operated by the Anaconda Copper Mining Company, and later by the Atlantic Richfield Company (ARCO), until its closure on April 22, 1982. Today, it is a pit of acidic wastewater filled with hazardous chemicals, including copper and arsenic. The road back to Three Forks was along beautiful Montana Highway #2.

After a fun-filled and educational day, we sat on the patio at the Sacajawea Hotel and sang along with Rod Frazier and his banjo, Susan Snow, and Sandy Carlson. I didn't see any recording scouts, which goes to show they didn't know what they were missing!





Left to right: Bob and Sally Murray, Chester and Nancy Bradfield outside the Old Montana Prison.



Carol and Ray Maxfield on the Last Chance Tour Train.

On a cool sunny morning, we drove to Helena to tour the Montana Capitol. We divided into small groups with very knowledgeable Montana State Historical Society docents who walked us through the interesting building. We learned that a design competition for the new Capitol building was held in 1896. The commission selected a design by George R. Mann as the winner. A year later, it was discovered that the commission was planning to defraud the building project, and it was disbanded. A second Capitol Commission convened. The new commission rejected Mann's plan as too costly and held a second design competition, which Charles Emlen Bell and John Hackett Kent won. Mann's design was later used as the basic design for the Arkansas State Capitol!

The Montana Capitol building features many significant works of art, but of special importance to Lewis and Clark enthusiasts is the 1912 painting, titled "Lewis and Clark Meeting the Flathead Indians at Ross' Hole," by renowned Montana artist Charlie Russell. The mural, displayed above the Speaker's chair in the House of Representatives' chamber, is 25 feet long and twelve feet high. It depicts the explorers Lewis and Clark meeting Montana's Bitterroot Salish people upon their return across the Bitterroot Mountains from

the Pacific Ocean in 1806. Our docent enjoyed pointing out the wolf in the center front of the scene, which would be poised to attack the Speaker of the House at any time.

After leaving the Capitol Building, we boarded two Last Chance Tour Trains, which delivered us to St. Peter's Cathedral for a delicious catered luncheon. Being tourists is hard work, and it felt good to sit in the cool parish hall to eat.



Meriwether Lewis' Masonic apron.

We walked a block down the street to visit the Montana Masonic Museum, where we saw Meriwether Lewis' Masonic apron. This apron was given to Lewis in 1799 upon his initiation as a Master Mason. A piece of history that Lewis held in his hands and wore, although there is no documentation to suggest that it traveled with him.

The Last Chance Tour provided our group with comfortable seating on their open-air tour trains. They took us through the opulent mansion district, past the Cathedral of St. Helena, and we rolled by the governor's home. We saw a restored miners' village, enjoyed the unique architecture along Last Chance Gulch, and caught a glimpse of the Old Fire Tower. It was a fun way to see and learn from the 'engineers' about beautiful and historic Helena!





The Museum of the Rockies houses one of the most complete Tyrannosaurus skeletons on display.

Another beautiful day found us traveling east to the Museum of the Rockies in Bozeman. We toured the remarkable collection of dinosaur fossils, including the fully mounted Montana's T. Rex skeleton, which stands as a testament to the museum's status as a leading institution in paleontological research and exhibition.

"Explore Yellowstone" is an exhibit in the upstairs Martin Children's Discovery Center that is designed for youngsters up to the age of eight and based on the science and history of Yellowstone Park. Our *slightly* older members were quite taken by the unique exhibits in this section of the museum.

Doug and Carlene Krogh's 1935 Auburn.



We enjoyed lunch on the museum patio and then returned to the Three Forks area to resume our Lewis and Clark quest. On the way we stopped at the Madison Buffalo Jump. Here runners, highly skilled young men trained for speed and endurance, wore buffalo, antelope, or wolf skins to lure bison to the "pishkun" or cliff. The buffalo jump was often the key to existence for native peoples. Although the introduction of horses led to the abandonment of this jump sometime after 1700, the rugged outcropping now serves as an inspiring monument to the region's early inhabitants.

At Headwaters State Park, we learned from the ranger that Lewis and Clark stayed here in July 1805. Clark wrote, "We proceeded on a few miles to the three forks of the Missouri those three forks are nearly of a Size, the North fork [Jefferson River] appears to have the most water and must be Considered as the one best Calculated for us to ascend."

Headwaters State Park encompasses the confluence of the Jefferson, Madison, and Gallatin Rivers where they combine to become the Missouri River. Considering the Missouri River an essential point in the geography of this western part of the continent, Meriwether Lewis wrote that the country opens suddenly to extensive and beautiful plains and meadows which appear to be surrounded in every direction with distant and lofty mountains. Sacajawea was captured near here as a child and eventually returned as a member of the Corps of Discovery. Pioneers gradually settled the surrounding area, transforming it into profitable grazing and farming land.

We enjoyed the talk by a state park ranger as we swatted mosquitoes and saw the landscape as it was in 1805 and 1806, as the Corps of Discovery made their way through.

Yvonne Krogstad and her grandson, Kyle Danielson, who joined VMCCA after having such a great time with us.





A handful of Lewis and Clark Tour automobiles parked at the Headwaters State Park near Three Forks where we heard a ranger talk about Lewis and Clark's dilemma deciding which of the three forks was the Missouri River leading them to the Continental Divide.

Cheryl Clifton relaxes for a moment with her and husband Bob's 1962 Chevy Pick-up Truck.



Our last event of the tour was a guided walking tour through Magris Talc Manufacturing in Three Forks, where we each donned protective gear, including hard hats, vests, and ear protection. A definite fashion statement!

Talc is the world's softest mineral. Talc as an ore body has its own features and was formed many millions of years ago. Magris Talc manufactures and markets talc used in adhesives and sealants, building products, plastics, rubber, paints, food, paper and board, pharmaceuticals, ceramics, and other specialty markets. Magris Talc ore is mined near Ennis, Montana, and trucked to the manufacturing plant in Three Forks.



Roy and Liz Dansie's 1930 Buick Model 61.

As the sky darkened with rain clouds, we moved into the Sacajawea Hotel's event tent for our closing banquet. Jim and

Charlie Froehlich has to keep his eyes on his wife Ardie.



Judy Johnson thanked everyone who had helped during the tour, as well as encouraging others to host tours in the future. They announced the winners of the silent auction, with the proceeds going to the VMCCA Scholarship fund.

Sally Murray, Bob Murray, and Yvonne Krogstad were honored as the only three to have attended all eight Lewis and Clark tours from 2017 to 2025. Mark Hamlin, VMCCA Executive Vice President, urged everyone to promote VMCCA membership, and Ray Maxfield presented three media awards. Steve Fitzgerald encouraged everyone to consider nominating cars and drivers for the VMCCA National Awards, reminding all that the nomination forms are available on the VMCCA website, in the tour booklet, and with him. Easy to find!

We enjoyed the evening, but all good things must come to an end, and thus was the end of the eighth VMCCA Lewis and Clark tours. New friends were made and old friendships were renewed.

"After taking our farewell of these good-hearted, hospitable, and obliging sons of the west, we proceeded on."
—Patrick Gass, the last known survivor of the expedition.

(Photo credits to Holly Crawley, Jim and Judy Johnson, Ray Maxfield, Bob Murray, and Shirley Reed)



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