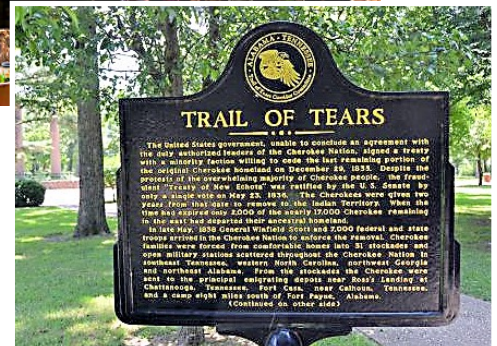




## Special Order #17, December 2020 41st Annual OIW Assembly

***To the End of the Trail of Tears***  
**Oklahoma City - October 7-10, 2021**



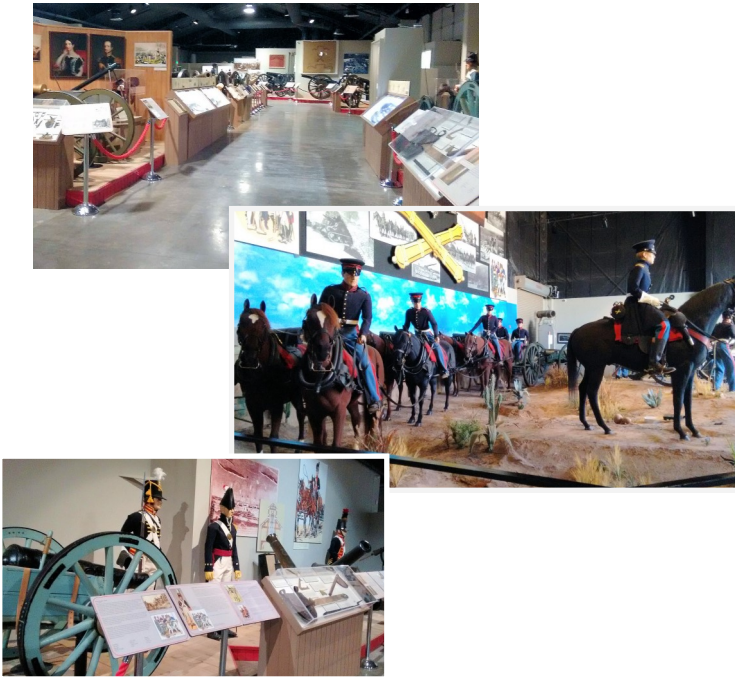
As announced at our 2019 assembly banquet, our 2020 assembly was scheduled for Oklahoma City, with the set-piece being a visit to Old Fort Sill and to the U.S. Army Field Artillery Museum. Other sites included Tahlequah for the Cherokee Heritage Center, Fort Reno, (now the headquarters for the U.S. Cavalry Association), Fort Gibson and, of course, the National Cowboy and Western Heritage Museum. By early March, 2020, the COVID 19 virus changed lives and plans. As thousands were struck by this new killer, event after event was cancelled. At first we thought that certainly by October we would have a handle on the virus. We did not. Following the advice of almost everyone in the field of medicine, we, along with nearly every other organization, cancelled plans for our 2020 assembly. As I write this Special Order in mid-November, Fort Sill is still not open. Fort Reno, another very important post on our itinerary, is not open. To cap it off, the tour bus company we had tentatively selected went out of business! It is clear that our 2020 assembly was not meant to be.

Things look better for 2021. We have secured the same hotel, Embassy Suites right on the grounds of the airport in Oklahoma City. By our scheduled dates, October 7-10, 2021, we have reasonable expectations that everything will be open. We are continuing with our plans under those assumptions. As things stand now, here are the plans: We will meet on Thursday, October 7th, at 1:00PM. Speakers are currently being contacted. Roy Young, the current board chairman of the Wild West History Association and was one of our speakers at the 2005 assembly at Fort Sill has agreed to speak at our 2021 meeting. This conference owes a great debt to Michael Hughes who has been very instrumental in us coming to Oklahoma City, will also be one of our speakers. Other speakers will be posted on our website, ([www.indianwars.com](http://www.indianwars.com).) On the following pages are pictures of tentative sites we hope to visit.

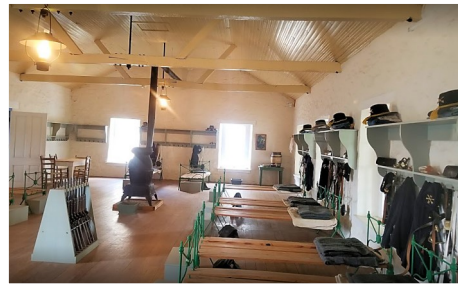


## Sites on *To the End of Trail of Tears* Tour

### *U.S. Army Field Artillery Museum*



### *Old Fort Sill*



### *Honey Springs Battlefield*



### *Fort Gibson*



### *Fort Reno*



John Carson



*Cherokee Heritage Center*



*Oklahoma City National Memorial*



*National Cowboy Hall of Fame and Western Heritage Center*



OIW board member and long-time friend, Layton Hooper, died November 12, 2020, of an apparent heart attack. He was a noted authority of the Indian Wars in the Southwest, specializing in the scouts, both Indian and white. He was the chairman for the Order of Indian Wars Denver Symposium since 2007. Layton created, with the help of Mary Lou Backus, the OIW Facebook page. His presence was felt in so many ways, by so many people. He was universally respected and loved.



# **2021 To the End of the Trail of Tears**

## **Selective Bibliography**

Nye, Colonel W. S., *Carbine & Lance: The Story of Old Fort Sill*, University of Oklahoma Press, Norman, 1969.

If you are going to read one book, this is it. Though published in 1937, this remains the final word on the only army post in the United States to have two flag poles and two flag ceremonies daily. This is a great start.

Worde, Mary Jane, *When the Wolf Came: The Civil War and the Indian Territory*, The University of Arkansas Press, Fayetteville, AR, 2013.

An outstanding piece of work covering our tour's particular interest. We will be in much of the area covered by this volume. Invaluable.

Spivey, Towana, *Silent Witness: The Diary of a Historic Tree at Fort Sill*, The Connin Company Publishers, Virginia Beach, VA, 2010

Our tour guide for the 2005 assembly, Towana Spivey, has written a delightful light history of Fort Sill as observed by a gigantic 250-year-old bur oak tree. "If only these woods could speak!" Well, now they do. Most enjoyable, as well as informative and concise.

Robinson, Charles M., *Satanta: The Life and Death of a War Chief*, State House Press, Austin, TX, 1997

Satanta (the role model for Blue Duck in *Lonesome Dove*) was a key player in so much of the history of this area. Charles Robinson does him justice here. Satanta is buried at Fort Sill, along with Quanah Parker, Cynthia Ann Parker, Black Beaver and many other warriors of great repute. The area is often referred to as the Indian Arlington.

Hoig, Stan, *Fort Reno and the Indian Territory Frontier*, University of Oklahoma Press, Norman, 2005.

Stan Hoig has written a number of books on the Indian wars. In all cases they are solid and reliable. This work on Fort Reno falls in the category. Fort Reno is also the home of the U.S. Cavalry Association. This book will enhance your visit to the post.

Agnew, Brad, *Fort Gibson: Terminal on the Trail of Tears*, University of Oklahoma Press, Norman, OK, 1980

Fort Gibson was not a typical post. The author points out that not a single Indian was killed by troops from Fort Gibson, and only one soldier from the post died at the hands of Indians. This fort was a peacekeeper. It apparently did its duty well.

Gwyne, S.C. *Empire of the Summer Moon*, Scribners, New York, 2010.

Once in a blue moon, a history book hits it big. Think *Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee*, *Undaunted Courage*, or *Blood and Thunder*. *Empire of the Summer Moon* is one of those books. Gwyne is a master story teller and this is a wonderful read. This is the story of Quanah Parker, one of the legendary chiefs. He is buried at Fort Sill with Satanta, Geronimo and Parker's mother, Cynthia Ann. A must read!

Purdue, Theda and Michael D. Greene, *The Cherokee Nation and the Trail of Tears*, Viking, New York, 2007.

This small volume is an excellent summary of one of our nation's tragic stories. There is a portion of the Cherokee Heritage Center devoted to this story and its sad tale.



**40th Annual Order of the Indian Wars  
2019 Assembly After Action Report**  
*The Road to Sand Creek*  
Colorado Springs Colorado - September 12-15, 2019



Nothing can show the physical diversity (now that's certainly PC) like beginning in Colorado Springs and ending at Sand Creek. We visited private trading posts, fur trade posts, three army forts, the scene of two massacres, one white and one Indian, ate well and learned some great geography and history.

After our usual set of excellent speakers (see your DVD for the complete talks), we sat down to a great dinner and then a film. I think everyone enjoyed *The Cheyenne Social Club* with Henry Fonda and Jimmy Stewart. The movie proved to be a real crowd pleaser. Not exactly Indian wars, but so entertaining.

After breakfast buffet in our elegant hotel, we hit the road for Pueblo, Colorado and the little known El Pueblo Museum. This is a mostly undiscovered gem. The museum covers a great deal about the early fur trade years in the area and, in particular, the fur trade post at this spot. On December 25th, 1854, a force of Ute and Jicarilla Apaches came into this





post feigning friendship and massacred the traders. Some 15 were killed and three were taken captive - a woman and two children. The fort was abandoned then briefly revived by the gold rush of 1859. Lost for many years, the ruins were uncovered and are now being stabilized. It's a little known museum that gets better and better.



Climbing over La Veta Pass, we exceeded 9,500 feet in altitude and the views were truly spectacular. We arrived in Fort Garland and the first thing on the agenda was the picnic lunch we had picked up in Pueblo.

The weather was beautiful and everyone was impressed with Fort Garland. This fort is a typical two company post and is very well restored by the state of Colorado. Established in 1858, Fort Garland protected the settlers in the San Louis Valley. During the Ute War of 1879, Mackinzie used Garland as his base. The post commander's quarters has been restored to reflect it's appearance when Brigadier General Christopher (Kit) Carson was the occupant. We would be seeing a great deal more of Carson on this trip.







*Some members found Fort Garland fascinating!*

The tour made an unscheduled stop at Francisco Fort in LaVeta. This was a commercial fort, providing protection for the local area residents, but was never military. It provided an interesting contrast to the just visited Fort Garland. Gradually Francisco Fort was simply swallowed up by the people it protected and became the base for the town of LaVeta.





Leaving LaVeta and Francisco Fort and heading east was a shock to many - where did the mountains go? We left them behind and headed to LaJunta, Colorado. Our motel for the next two nights was the Holiday Inn and we took up the entire establishment. We were met here by John Carson, the great grandson of Kit Carson. John recreated his great-grandfather for the visitors to Bent's Old Fort - one of the finest projects in all of the National Park Service. I have just learned that, as of last month, John Carson retired. He'll be sorely missed. John has promised me that he intends to stay active in the OIW. At least, NPS's loss is not ours.

We had dinner at the perfect spot for the OIW - a wonderful bar that even served food - great food. Boss Hoggs was where I first met John Carson in 1999. He has been with us on several tours, most recently in Amarillo, Texas.

Our first stop Saturday morning was the Kit Carson Chapel at the entrance to Fort Lyon (the second). This highly modified building is where Kit Carson spent the last days of his life. Carson was extremely ill and was being treated by Fort Lyon's Doctor Tilton. In order to give better care to the aging legend (and retired brigadier general), Tilton had Carson removed from Boggsville and into Tilton's home on Fort Lyon. It was in this highly modified structure that Kit Carson died. In 1958 the building was turned into a chapel, named for Carson. It was subsequently moved outside of the fort proper, near the entrance to the post cemetery.





From the chapel we did a drive-by to see the numerous 1860's buildings (thoroughly modernized) still standing on post itself. There are two warehouses that remain virtually untouched. The post is now a center for helping homeless people learn a trade and get back to productive lives. It is important to note that it was not this fort, but Fort Wise-Lyon that was the departure point of for the Sand Creek campaign. We headed there next.



While thousands of people have visited Fort Lyon (the second) and tens of thousands have visited Bent's Old Fort National Monument, comparatively few have been to our next destination: Bent's New Fort and Fort Wise - Lyon. After departing from Bent's Old Fort, William Bent built his new fort right on the Santa Fe Trail near the crossing of the Arkansas River, some 30 miles east. Built in 1859, this time the fort was constructed of stone. He picked the spot with great care - the fort was in the area know as "the Big Timbers" for the abundance of trees. Business was not thriving so, when the U.S. Army decided to build Fort Wise just below his trading post, Bent leased the fort to the army for a storage depot.

Fort Wise was named for Henry A. Wise, governor of the state of Virginia. When Virginia seceded from the Union, the name was changed to Fort Lyon, in honor of General Nathaniel Lyon, the first Union general to die in action during the Civil War. It was from this Fort Lyon that Colonel Chivington departed for Sand Creek. Fort Wise - Lyon was abandoned in 1867 when the Arkansas River inundated the post. Fearing a repeat, the fort was moved to the present site which we visited earlier.





From our visit to Bent's New Fort and Fort Wise-Lyon, we headed to the Big Timbers Museum in Lamar, Colorado. While the museum holds many interesting items, our main interest were the items loaned by Chuck and Sheri Bowen. Over 2500 artifacts from the battle of Sand Creek were discovered on the Bowen ranch. The Bowens were present and told us the story of finding the actual battle site, long thought to be over three miles away.



We left the Big Timbers Museum and headed for lunch. Remember the old saying "Always eat where the truck drivers eat?" That's exactly what we did. We had our lunch at a truck stop buffet serving Mexican food. It was delicious!

While the tour was *The Road to Sand Creek*, our next stop was Bent's Old Fort National Historic Site. This would be the high-light of almost any tour devoted to American history.

Reconstructed in 1976 as Colorado's Bicentennial project, Bent's Old Fort is one of NPS's crowning achievements. We were divided into three groups, each led by one of the site's incredible guides for a one and a half hour tour. It wasn't nearly enough. Everyone left feeling like we could have stayed another day. Unfortunately the park closed at four o'clock.











Our last stop of the day, Boggsville, also closed at four o'clock, but was graciously opened up for our group by the site director, Larry Bourne. Larry gave us a condensed history of this very important site in Colorado history. This was the last home of Kit Carson and both he and his wife, Josefa, were first buried here. Their bodies were later removed to rest in the cemetery in Taos, New Mexico.

From Boggsville we drove through the wonderful cemetery there, visiting the graves of John Westley Prowers, Amache Prowers (John's wife) and William Bent.

We finished our very full day at Jodi's Grill - arguably LaJunta's best. They closed to the public so we had the entire place. It was a good thing, I don't think they could have seated one more person. From Jodi's we returned to the Holiday Inn for our last night on the road.







The next morning we headed to the Sand Creek Massacre site. Neil Mangum, our tour guide, and Michael Hughes entertained us on the hour and a half drive to the site. What that pair didn't know wasn't worth knowing! This team will again be our guides in Oklahoma City. Don't worry - I'll be along to interpret for Neil or to grab the mic from Michael when he goes on too long. Someone has to do it!

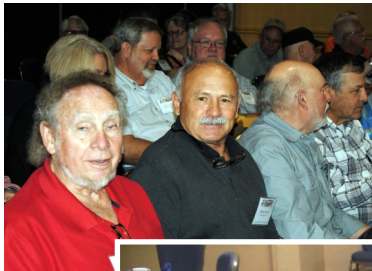
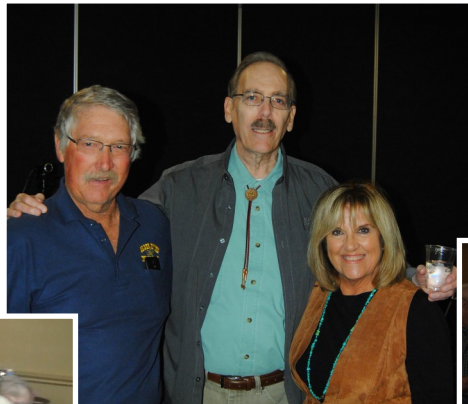
We arrived at the focal point of our tour, Sand Creek, about 9:30AM. Our first stop was, of course, the rest rooms followed by a visit to the small bookstore. Then off to the overlook of this, possibly the most infamous engagement of our entire Indian Wars. Our on site guide, Jeff Campbell, gave us a rather more legislative discussion of the site than I wanted. It was followed by our own Greg Michno's thoughts. We spent about two hours here. Not enough time, but there never is.





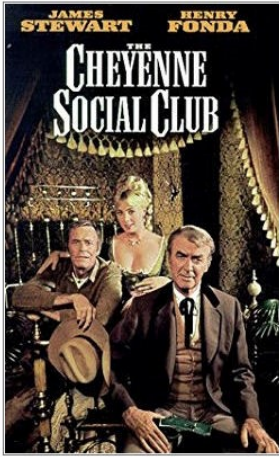
We headed from Sand Creek to Eads, Colorado. We had 84 people on the two busses and it is Sunday in rural Colorado. Luckily we found JJ's Café when we scouted this trip. Dee and I visited with the owner, ate a meal there, and knew we had solved one major problem. Since JJ's wasn't normally open on Sunday, they didn't have to close. Everyone agreed that this tiny café, in this tiny town (population 592), was outstanding. Back to Colorado Springs, the Hotel Elegante and our banquet. The hotel provided us with excellent accommodations, very fine dining and great facilities – everything we needed.

Our banquet speaker was Danny Martinez. Danny is an ever popular speaker - nay entertainer - and this performance was no exception. He spoke of his several years of service at Custer Battlefield, later the Little Bighorn Battlefield National Monument. During his time there he served under Neil Mangum. We learned quite a bit about not only the battlefield, but also Neil! It was a wonderful way to end a wonderful assembly. I made the anxiously awaited announcement that our next assembly would be Oklahoma City, October 8-11, 2020. We didn't make it, but that's another story. You should have been there.





If only the speakers could command their attention like this!





## Speakers at the 40th Annual Assembly



**Greg Michno**



**Michael Hughes**



**Mike Koury**



**Danny Martinez**



**Ray Sumner**



**Jerry Greene**

There will be a new Special Order in June, 2021, with the final details on the assembly. Of course, the latest information will be on our website, [www.indianwars.com](http://www.indianwars.com).

Make your plans now to join us for the 41st annual Order of the Indian Wars National Assembly, *To the End of the Trail of Tears*. October 7-10, Oklahoma City.