

Contact: Kelly McCandless
Billings Chamber of Commerce
Phone: (406) 869-3732
(406) 861-2981
kelly@BillingsChamber.com
www.BillingsChamber.com

P.O. Box 31177
815 S. 27th St.
Billings, MT 59107
Fax: (406) 245-7333
www.VisitBillings.com
www.BrandBillings.com



Media Release

Dedication Ceremony for “Clarks Crossing” 209 years following the Lewis & Clark Expedition’s stop in Billings.

For Immediate Release

Billings, MT, July 16, 2015: On Friday, July 24, 2015 at 10:00 a.m., the Billings Chamber of Commerce will hold a dedication ceremony for Clarks Crossing to officially adopt the name, share the site’s heritage and present greater visions for the site and our Heritage Trail System. The ceremony (which will include a volley from the Pompeys Pillar Elk River Brigade) will be held near the old Washington Street Bridge just off of Garden Avenue adjacent to the north bank of the Yellowstone River near the actual place where the Expedition crossed the river on July 24, 1806. (Event location map on page 2).

“This is yet another opportunity to connect a significant part of our community’s history to the Heritage Trail,” explains Chamber President and CEO John Brewer. “Offering a venue that shares this history and the incredible story of Clark’s return trip along the river gives visitors more reasons to stay, and encourages families to move here, ultimately addressing our community’s workforce shortages.”

The dedication date, July 24th, is the anniversary of the original day of the historic crossing and falls on the day before Clark Days 2015 at Pompeys Pillar. On July 10, 2014, the U.S. Board on Geographic Names approved an application to name a locale in Yellowstone County as Clarks Crossing. The name originated from the location where William Clark, on his 1806 return to St. Louis, had the Corps’ remaining horses crossed to the south side of the Yellowstone River. The objective was to take the horses on an over-land shortcut to the Mandan villages.

The name Clarks Crossing has been entered into the Geographic Names Information System, the nation’s official geographic names repository, which is available and searchable online at <http://geonames.usgs.gov>. Only two names pertinent to the Lewis & Clark Expedition have been applied for and approved in Montana since the year 2000. The other name is Yorks Islands near Townsend, which honored Clark’s servant and boyhood companion on the Expedition.

After having the horses crossed to the south side with Pryor, Windsor, Shannon and Hall, Captain Clark continued his journey in their two recently constructed canoes, and on the next day signed his name on the famous Pompeys Pillar. The two sites, Pompeys Pillar and Clarks Crossing, are two of the most

significant historical Lewis & Clark locations on the Yellowstone River, along with the location where Captain Clark had constructed their canoes south of Park City.

The Yellowstone County Museum at Billings Logan Airport currently has a significant display of exhibits in regard to Clark's Canoe Camp, including the artifacts that were discovered on that site near current day Park City. The campsite has been recognized by the State of Montana and the federal government with a Smithsonian number, 24ST0720.

The Yellowstone County Museum will also unveil a Clarks Crossing interpretive sign at the Museum in the upcoming weeks.

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The Billings Chamber of Commerce represents you, our 1,200 members who employ more than 44,000 people. We help you grow your bottom line by connecting you to opportunities and advocating for your business and our community.

