

FIRST DRAFT

Carnegie horses key to development of Dinosaur National Monument

In 1910, Earl Douglass was on a mission. He needed horses and wagons — lots of them — to haul dinosaur bones he had discovered near Jensen, Utah, to the nearest railroad depot.

From there, they would go to the Carnegie Museum in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Andrew Carnegie was sponsoring his research at what would later become Dinosaur National Monument.

The horses and mules Douglass hired are now called the Carnegie Horses, and they will be among those recognized at the Mesa



BOB SILBERNAGEL

County Fair on July 14 by the Colorado Plateau Horseman's Hall of Fame, a nonprofit group of which I am a member. This is our second year of honoring horsemen, horsewomen and the horses that contributed significantly to western Colorado and eastern Utah.

The Carnegie Horses will also be recognized later this summer at a ceremony at Dinosaur National Monument near Jensen. The monument turned 100 in 2015, and will be celebrating the 100th anniversary of the National Park Service on Aug. 25.

The nearest accessible railroad line was roughly 60 miles due south of Jensen, at Dragon, Utah, near Baxter Pass.

From there, the fossils were put on the Uintah Railway and chugged 60 more miles over Baxter and into Mack, where they would be transferred to rail cars heading east to Pittsburgh.

Douglass was there to supervise the first transfer on Nov. 4, 1910, and was disgusted by

the way the railroad workers handled his precious cargo. But all the fossils made it safely to Pittsburgh.

Before they could make the journey on rails, however, they had to be hauled to Dragon by teams pulling wagons and bones ensconced in plaster of Paris, then contained in wooden crates. It was no simple task.

"Had an awful time getting the heavy specimen of the carnivorous dinosaur into the wagon box," Douglass wrote in his journal Oct. 31, 1910. "The bottom broke out and the boys wired it up."

To make the initial trip, Douglass hired nine teams and wagons in Jensen. They would be the first of many teams. Over the next 15 years, Douglass and his workers excavated and shipped about 350 tons of dinosaur bones and related material, said Sonya Popelka, interpretive operations supervisor at Dinosaur National Monument.

Most of the bones went to the Carnegie Museum in Pittsburgh, but some were sent to Salt Lake City, Denver, the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C., and 15 other locations around this country and overseas.

Nobody knows how many horses and mules, purchased or hired locally, were involved in hauling the fossils. But it's clear they were indispensable to Douglass' efforts.

"You don't often think of horses and mules when you see dinosaur bones in a museum," but they were critical to the



PHOTOS COURTESY OF NATIONAL PARK SERVICE, DOUGLASS COLLECTION, EDITED BY EVAN HALL

A convoy of wagons pulled by Carnegie horses and carrying dinosaur fossils heads from the dinosaur quarry toward Dragon, Utah.

work, said Popelka. "The first time it clicked for me was when I saw a photo of horses dragging an excavator" at Douglass' dig.

Earl Douglass was raised in Medford, Minnesota, where he became a teacher and formed an interest in paleontology, primarily ancient mammals.

He taught in small communities in Minnesota, the Dakotas and Montana while he obtained a master's degree in paleontology. In 1902, he began work for the Carnegie Museum, which initially supported his search for ancient mammal fossils.

But this was the Age of Dinosaur Discoveries. Every major museum wanted dinosaur skeletons, the bigger the better.

By summer of 1909, Douglass had clear orders from Carnegie to "dig up dinosaur bones east of Vernal." The area was known to have Jurassic formations but had been little explored by others. On his way West, Douglass stopped at Rifle. On July 23, north of Rifle, he found the bones of what he believed was a coryphodon — a hippopotamus-sized mammal, as well as bones of wolf ancestors.

He considered spending the summer in Rifle, but decided he'd better follow orders and

CARNEGIE HORSES RECOGNIZED

The Colorado Plateau Horseman's Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony will be during the Mesa County Fair, at 6 p.m. July 14 in the main rodeo arena.

continue to Vernal. East of Vernal near Jensen, he made his first major discovery on Aug. 17, 1909: "At last in the top of the ledge ... I saw eight of the tail bones of a brontosaurus (now called Apatosaurus) in exact position," he wrote. "It was a beautiful sight."

The bones were part of a jumble of fossils of 400 to 500 dinosaurs that were washed into an ancient riverbed, said Popelka. Over eons, that riverbed solidified into rock and was raised into a near-vertical cliff face. It's this cliff face that people can see and touch at the Dinosaur Quarry Visitors Center at Dinosaur National Monument.

Although Douglass and his crews removed many of those fossils and large portions of the cliff face, a significant amount remains — the bones of perhaps 100 individuals, she said.

Douglass was one of the first paleontologists to realize that

people want to see dinosaur bones as they were discovered, not just in museums.

So, he pushed hard, even after Dinosaur was declared a national monument in 1915, to provide a place where visitors could see bones in place. He didn't live to see the modern visitors center, but it was part of his vision.

He also grew attached to some of the horses, especially a team of white mules named Bill and Joe. Douglass bought them to pull a buggy for his wife, Pearl.

Earl Douglass died in 1931. He spent his final days on a small plot of land he owned with his wife, Pearl, just outside of Dinosaur National Monument. It is now within the monument.

About five years ago, the Carnegie Museum returned a single wooden box to Dinosaur National Monument. It contained the humerus of a large, plant-eating sauropod that had been excavated and crated by Douglass nearly a century earlier. It was never removed from its crate or plaster cast.

It traveled back to Jensen, Utah, by truck. But the Carnegie horses deserve credit for hauling it out originally.



Earl Douglass stands on a ledge where he discovered the first dinosaur bones in what became Dinosaur National Monument.

this column came from Dinosaur National Monument, Gordon Hirschi of Vernal, and the book, "Speak to the Earth and It Will Teach You: The Life and Times of Earl Douglass, 1862-1931," by his son, G.E. Douglass.

Bob Silbernagel's email is bohsilbernagel@gmail.com.

Information and assistance for



A team of mules, probably Bill and Joe, skids a fossil encased in plaster of Paris down a steep hillside from the quarry to a spot where it can be loaded on a wagon.

BLOTTER COMPILED BY SENTINEL STAFF



This is how one of the men suspected of stealing a lawnmower valued at nearly \$1,000 appeared on a store surveillance camera.

Suspects sought in theft of expensive lawnmower

Crim Stoppers of Mesa County is seeking help finding two men accused of stealing a valuable lawnmower.

At about 1 p.m. May 7, two white males entered Western Implement, 2919 North Ave., selected a Toro TimeMaster 30-inch lawn mower and left the store without paying for it. The lawnmower is valued at more than \$990.

The first male had brown hair tied in a ponytail and was seen wearing a light-colored baseball cap with a Denver Broncos emblem, a green shirt and dark jacket and pants. The second male had short, dark hair and was seen wearing a gray sweatshirt

and jeans. They were seen in a black Dodge truck.

Anyone with information is asked to call 241-7867 or go to www.241STOP.com. All information is anonymous and if it leads to an arrest can earn up to \$1,000.

According to the Grand Junction Police Department:

■ Peter Schlichenmayer, 36, was arrested June 26 in the 300 block of East Valley Circle on suspicion of harassing a known victim.

■ Sam Rivera, 55, was arrested June 26 in the 2600 block of Caribbean Drive on suspicion of causing pain or injury to a victim, moving the victim from one location to another against the victim's will and preventing the victim from leaving. Rivera previously was in an intimate relationship with the victim. He was arrested on suspicion of domestic violence, assault, child abuse, kidnapping, false imprisonment and harassment.

■ Samantha Shepard, 32, was contacted in the 2400 block of North Avenue on June 27 on a consensual contact, and during that contact was alleged to be in possession of a controlled substance and drug paraphernalia.

■ Annmarie Caine, 34, was contacted near 10th Street and Colorado Avenue June 27 regarding a verbal disturbance, and during the contact was alleged to have consumed and been in possession of alcohol, in violation of three protection orders. She also allegedly made false claims to an arresting officer in order to avoid being taken to jail.

■ Someone used a financial device without permission in the 2900 block of D Road Tuesday afternoon, causing a loss of less than \$2,000.

■ Kilte Walsh, 35, was arrested Wednesday on suspicion of violating a protection order.

GETTING IT RIGHT

"Getting it right" appears as needed to correct erroneous information that has appeared in The Daily Sentinel's news columns, to add details that should not have been omitted from a story or to correct typographical errors that changed the meaning of the story.

The geothermal feature in Yellowstone National Park pictured on Page One Sunday should have been referred to as Grand Prismatic Spring.

■ A bicycle valued at less than \$1,000 was stolen from a garage in the 300 block of Lorey Drive on Thursday morning.

■ Nathan Siemers, 23, was arrested Friday near 29 Road and River View Lane on suspicion of trespassing, possessing burglary tools and possessing a controlled substance.

■ Moises Ramirez, 31, was arrested Friday evening in the 2200 block of U.S. Highway 6 & 50 on suspicion of driving under the influence, careless driving, leaving the scene of an accident and obstruction.

■ Sean McNeil-Stine, 18, was arrested Friday night in the 600 block of Main Street on suspicion of breaking into a vehicle parked in the 400 block of Rood Avenue and attempting to steal property valued at more than \$1,000 from it.

According to the Mesa County Sheriff's Office:

■ Matthias Kush, 31, was arrested June 26 in the 3000 block of F Road on suspicion of domestic violence and obstruction of telephone service.

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