

mysterious fire destroyed the shack. Unfazed, the sisters rebuilt on the same land a larger house with a solid foundation. The club women, now faced with the prospect of a permanent business, pressed the railroad again to evict the sisters. This time the company agreed. The sisters, undaunted, put their house on wheels and moved it to the main street of town directly across from the post office. Proudly denying they had been evicted, they claimed they were simply moving closer to their clientele.

H The Judith River

West of Hobson.

When the Lewis and Clark Expedition came up the Missouri River in 1805 Capt. Clark named the Judith River for one of the girls he left behind him.

Southwest of here is the Pig-eye Basin and beyond that, in the Little Belt Mountains, is Yogo Gulch. Yogo sapphires are mined there. They are the deepest colored sapphires found in the world and the only ones mined from a lode. When combined with Montana nuggets they make a mighty pretty and unique combination for rings, cuff links, pins and similar fancy doodads. Oriental, as well as all other Montana sapphires are found in placer ground.

The Judith Basin country was the early-day stomping ground of Charley M. Russell, famous and beloved Montana cowboy artist. Charley is now camped somewhere across the Great Divide where the grass is good and there aren't any fences.

32. Attraction

T Ackley Lake State Park

17 miles west of Lewistown on U.S. 87 to Hobson, then 5 miles south on Secondary 400, then 2 miles southwest on county road. 454-5840

Ackley Lake, named after an early settler and frontiersman, offers diverse water sports opportunities. The lake provides good angling for 10 to 15 inch rainbow trout.

33. Attraction

Utica

This was the headquarters of the Judith Basin Cattle Pool and the site of the big Judith Basin roundup of the 1880s. Each fall as many as 500 cowboys gathered here. When they showed up Utica became a very lively town. To entertain themselves they raced their horses on the only street and hung out in the local saloons. One of the more prominent cowboys who spent time here was Charlie "Kid" Russell.

A fellow named Jake Hoover found sapphires in Yogo Gulch just north of town. Four New York prospectors heard of the strike and came rushing to the area. Unfortunately there wasn't enough sapphires to make a living for all four. The story goes that the four, during a particularly severe blizzard, decided they must have been crazy to have come here in the first place. They decided to name the place in memory of their hometown of Utica, New York because that was also where the state insane asylum was located. The miners, J. D. Waite, Frank Wright, John Murphy, and Joseph Cutting decided to settle in the area. Cutting became the first postmaster.

In 1881 John Murphy's cabin served as a post office for the convenience of the nearby settlers. It was a severe winter and the roads were often blocked by deep snow. The mail carrier's buckboard broke forcing him to leave on horseback. Because of his limited capacity, he took only the letters and left a heavier sack to pick up on his next trip through in a couple of months. Murphy

CHARLIE RUSSELL CHEW CHOO

This is one of the country's premier dinner trains. People from all over the world come here to experience this truly unique adventure. The ride includes great scenery, wildlife viewing opportunities, live entertainment, and a great Western style dinner you'll be talking about years after your trip. The train has grown from two cars to five since its inception in 1994. There is one car used for food preparation and a bar area, three used for dining, and one containing a gift shop and modern restrooms.

The train crosses three 150 foot high trestles ranging in length from 1,300 to 1,900 feet. The train also passes through a half-mile long

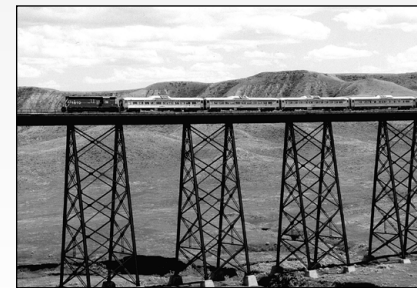


tunnel enroute. It's almost a guarantee that you'll see abundant wildlife along the route. The train passes through four railroad towns, three of which were built specifically by the railroad companies—Ware, Danvers, and Husac. And while you're watching the scenery, keep



your eyes out for outlaws who may be staking out a potential train job. The train turns around at Denton and dessert is served on the return trip.

An average of 184 people make each trip. The train runs a regular schedule and does charters for groups and organizations. It's a good idea to make reservations well in advance (at least two weeks). Reservations can be made by calling 538-2527. The current cost (subject to change) is \$75 which includes a prime rib



dinner. There is a cash bar available on the train. 408 NE Main, Lewistown, 538-5436.

Montana Trivia

Thomas Meagher, for whom Meagher was named, was an Irish rabble-rouser who, during his lifetime, was convicted of treason, was sentenced to life-imprisonment in the penal colonies of Tasmania, escaped and fled to America, became an editor, lawyer, and major general, and served as the acting governor of the Montana Territory. His name is pronounced "Mar" if you're from Montana, and "Meagher" if you're a tourist.

kicked the sack under his bunk on the dirt floor of the cabin where the dog slept on it. It gathered dust and he pretty much forgot about it. About the middle of May, a detachment of soldiers from Fort McGinnis rode in and said they were searching for a sack of money that had disappeared. Murphy remembered the sack the dog had been sleeping on all winter. As he pulled it from under his bunk, a soldier gasped and said, "That's it, that's the \$40,000 we've been moving heaven and earth to find."

This was a frequent campsite for Blackfeet and Crow Indians as they traveled cross-country between the Hardin and Browning areas. The route they followed was generally the same one used by stage and freight drivers.

T Utica Historical Museum

Rte 541, Main Street, Utica. 423-5208

The museum is a large collection of artifacts from the Homestead Era. Everything from household items to farm tools. There is also a large photo collection. Open Memorial Day through Labor Day, Wednesday through Sunday.

34. Attraction, Gas, Food, Lodging Stanford

Stanford is the county seat of Judith Basin County and had its beginnings as a station on the Fort Benton-Billings stage route. It was also a favorite hangout for the cowboys who worked for the numerous cattle companies surrounding the area before the homesteaders and sheep ranchers moved in. In 1880, the Bower brothers, Calvin and Edward brought a thousand head of sheep and purchased 100,000 acres to graze them on. When the settlement got a post office, the Bowers named the town for their old hometown, Stanfordville, in New York.

For years legends of white wolves roaming the area proliferated. One huge one, "Old Snowdrift," was a legendary outlaw. A mounted white wolf can be seen at the Basin Trading Post.

Montana Trivia

Petroleum County is the least populated county in Montana with a population of only 518. It was the last Montana county established, in 1925. The county seat is Winnett.