



The Black Hills MVPA Convoy!

Fort Robinson, Nebraska to Devil's Tower, Wyoming

An eight day journey of historic military vehicles, June 2013

Travel to those thrilling days of yesteryear as we retrace portions of the historic Fort Sidney to Deadwood Trail and the Custer 1874 expedition to the gold fields of Dakota. Marvel at the natural wonders of Toadstool Geological Park and at the man-made Mount Rushmore National Monument. Experience old west ghost towns and the steam powered 1880 Train. Get a taste of the old west at a chuck wagon dinner and an old army mess hall. Enjoy a beer at Deadwood's No.10 Saloon. See where such notables as California Joe, Little Bat and Lakota Sioux leader Crazy Horse met their end. Visit the graves of Calamity Jane and the last survivor of the Battle of the Little Big Horn. Stay in a luxurious cabin, an officer's quarters or camp out under the stars. Take a horseback ride or climb atop South Dakota's highest peak. It's all here waiting for you, the back roads, the prairie, the badlands and the mountain peaks. Come and join us.

Introduction

Thank you for considering traveling with us for what promises to be a very unique and adventurous vacation, for me a two week one. How did this convoy come about and where will it go? Read over the enclosed information at your leisure. I'm certain you will find the answers to the many questions you might have as you consider becoming a part of The 2013 Black Hills Convoy. It's not just a convoy. It will be an adventure!

I came to be a member of the Military Vehicle Preservation Association thru my love of history. I found myself most attracted to two periods from our past; first above all, the Second World War and secondly, our nation's westward expansion along the wagon trails of yore. When we were kids we played war in our back alleys. On our old black and white TV sets, that took several minutes to warm up, we watched an oft glorified history recreated electronically before our eyes. I was awe struck as I watched the likes of Audie Murphy in TO HELL AND BACK and Errol Flynn in THEY DIED WITH THEIR BOOTS ON. Oh to be like them. No sooner had I found gainful employment that I found my high school collection of WWII memorabilia augmented by the addition of a White halftrack. Ten years later I catered to that other hunger I pined for and became a member of a cavalry reenactment unit, Company C, 7th Illinois. For the next three decades I juggled these sometimes conflicting alternative existences.

Now close to retirement I found myself lamenting how I no longer ride horses, shoot guns and get dirty, old horse cavalry fashion. The Civil War film GLORY was my swan song. Still my past excursions to the old west are held most warmly to my breast. Greatest of these was my 1875 solo trek, forest service maps in hand, from Fort Meade, SD south to Fort Robinson, NE. Just my horse and I across 210 miles over ten days, thru four very different types of terrain; the Pine Ridge of NW Nebraska, the badlands typified by Toadstool Park, the National Grasslands and the pine forested and granite peaks of the Black Hills. How sad now my fate. I yearn to return.

But wait, do I not now own a jeep, a 1942 GPW? Did not the jeep replace the horse within the army? Eureka! Let's do it. Do what? Dust off that old steed and prepare to mount up. Easy Rider and Sturgis look out, here we come. Let's all head for the Rendezvous and hit the wagon trail north to the gold fields. North thru the Oglala Badlands and Buffalo Gap Grasslands to Hot Springs, SD. North into the Black Hills National Forest, thru Wind Cave and Custer Park. Ever forward thru the buffalo herds, past Mount Rushmore, on to historic Fort Meade and nearby Bear Butte. Cast our dice west to that den of inequity and vice, Deadwood. From there it will be westward to Devil's Tower in the Wyoming section of the Black Hills. And finally we turn south, to follow the Custer Trail of 1874 to the very location where gold was discovered! Then ever southward on the return stretch to what was then the Red Cloud Indian Agency where the native Americans came to draw their government beef and lament, like I, the passing of the old ways.

Yet it is not all gone, there remains much to see and do. So get out the saddle soap and prepare to mount. Bugler, sound boots and saddles!

Destination: Western Nebraska's premier state park, Fort Robinson, west of Crawford, has it all - with more than 22,000 acres of exquisite Pine Ridge scenery, compelling old west history, exceptional lodging, loads of fun-time activities, scenic camping and the park's own buffalo and longhorn herds.

This historic outpost served from the days of the Indian Wars until after World War II. This was the site of the 1879 Cheyenne Outbreak and the death of famed Sioux Chief Crazy Horse. Over the years, the fort served the Red Cloud Indian Agency, as a cavalry remount station, K-9 dog training center and German POW camp.

The State Historical Society operates a museum and many restored or reconstructed exhibit buildings to interpret the Fort's history. The University of Nebraska operates the Trailside Museum, which interprets the geology and natural history of the region.

There are many ways to spend a day at the fort. First on the agenda should be a ride on the horse drawn tour to get acquainted with this unique park. Enjoy a refreshing Pine Ridge morning on horseback or a Jeep ride among the buttes. When the day warms up, head for the indoor pool, complete with outdoor wading pool and sun deck. Take in a show at the Post Playhouse.

Fort Robinson Restaurant serves breakfast, lunch and dinner 6:30 AM – 9:00 PM daily during the summer season. Snacks are available at the Sutler's Store in the Activities Center. Take a hay ride to the Red Cloud Agency site for a chuck wagon dinner beside the campfire.

Fort Robinson State Park visitors can choose lodging from rooms in the 1909 enlisted men's quarters or "cabins" ranging from sleep 2 to 20 in the former officer's quarters that date from 1874 to 1909. All "cabins" have kitchens, baths, living rooms and bedrooms. Cabins are furnished with blankets, towels, stoves, refrigerators, silverware and cooking utensils. Some have air conditioning.

Fort Robinson State Park's shady campground offers electrical hookup sites plus primitive sites. Conveniently located are modern restrooms, showers, water, dump station, picnic tables and shelters. The beautiful Pine Ridge makes a great place to camp and enjoy the outdoors. Summer days can be warm to hot but at 4,000 feet above sea level and little humidity, be prepared for cool nights.

15 - 23 June 2013 Black Hills Convoy Tentative Itinerary

654 miles @ 8 days

Longest daily mileage: 120 mi. – Day 1

Shortest daily mileage: 56 mi. – Day 3

Average daily mileage: 84 mi.



Military Maneuvers at Fort Robinson during WWII

15th June (Saturday) - A day of activities at Fort Robinson!

Day 1: 16th June (Sunday) Ft. Robinson - Blue Bell Lodge. (120 miles)

Day 2: 17th June (Monday) Blue Bell Lodge - Nemo, SD (90 miles)

Day 3: 18th June (Tuesday) Nemo - Deadwood (56 miles)

Day 4: 19th June (Wednesday) Deadwood – Devils Tower (92 miles)

Day 5: 20th June (Thursday) Devils Tower – Palmer Gulch (115 miles)

Day 6: 21st June (Friday) A day of exploration near Palmer Gulch! (12 mi.)

Day 7: 22nd June (Saturday) A day of independent travel...

Palmer Gulch – Hot Springs. (80 mi.)

Day 8: 23rd June (Sunday) Hot Springs to Fort Robinson (89 miles)



Red Cloud Indian Agency

General Comments:

At this time the convoy is free and open to all MVPA member historic military vehicles and his or her guest riders. There is an enlistment fee which is to cover the printing, shipping and handling costs of the detailed thirty-four page brochure. HMVs must be street legal, licensed and insured. But there is **a limit of fifteen participant vehicles**. A very limited number of support vehicles will be permitted. This limit is due primarily because of the very restricted parking available at such sites as Mount Moriah Cemetery and the Botany Bay Picnic Area in Spearfish Canyon. Each support or chase vehicle must remain to the rear of the convoy. An official photographer would be welcome.

We will ask that each vehicle driver provide us with their cell phone numbers, if available, in order to keep touch as needed. Please do this so an addendum can be added listing these numbers to aid communication. Some walkie-talkies would be nice, especially for the lead and rear vehicles.

While the schedule I've drawn up is the route and stops that I will be taking, this need not be a nose-to-tail military drill. Each day a starting and stopping place is given. You are free to come and go as you please but we ask that you keep your convoy squad leader informed of your plans should you choose to deviate from the schedule. Perhaps you can only make one or more days of the trek? This is okay.

We will generally start each day's convoys at 8:30 AM, stop for a picnic lunch each day, unless noted, along the way and lager by 5:00 PM for the night. Each day we will divide into squads. Please team up with at least one other vehicle, unless of course, you are going home.

Starting with full fuel tanks from Fort Robinson, there are six planned fuel stops. They are in order: Hot Springs, Sturgis, Sundance, Hill City and again Hot Springs. It is suggested that you also fill up at Deadwood independently if needed.

Speeds: Plan on traveling slowly. Expect to travel between 35 & 40 MPH on flat stretches of prairie roadways. Through the hills and forest it is planned to travel between 30 & 35 MPH. There is no need to stay twenty yards from the vehicle in front. 100 yards is good but 200 yards is better when kicking up dust. Just keep the guy in front and behind you in sight. If you lose the guy behind slow up so he can catch up.

Roads: It is planned to avoid all major highways as much as possible. The most congested portions will probably be the Iron Mountain Road (Hwy 16A) from Custer State Park and Mount Rushmore, Hwy 14A from Sturgis to Deadwood and from Hill City to (Hwy 87) the Needles Highway.

There are several stretches of off pavement portions to the route. The first is N Moody Road, Toadstool Road, Orella Road and Hat Creek Road leading to Ardmore during the first leg of the journey. Second is US Forest Road 139 from Vanocker Canyon Road east to the Black Hills National Cemetery. We will again be traveling gravel roads as we proceed west thru the Bear Lodge Mountains of Wyoming. On the return leg to Fort Robinson we will be taking gravel and dirt roads from Ardmore, SD to the High Plains Homestead and Crawford, NE. Alternate paved routes are available.

- **Early bird enlistment brochure cost is \$20.00 per vehicles before Jan 1st 2013.**
- **Enlistment brochure after 1 January 2013 is \$40.00 per vehicle.**
- **Fees are nonrefundable except in the case of a convoy cancellation or unforeseen rescheduling of the convoy.**
- **Convoy is limited to fifteen street legal historic military vehicles.**
- **First come, first served, so sign up now!**
- **All vehicles must be capable of sustained speeds of 40 mph.**
- **Contact the organizer for the official application form.**

For an enlistment form contact...

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