

Mormon Pioneer National Heritage Area

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Bicycle Barnstorming Headed to Central Utah



The Dyreing Barn (above) in Manti and the the Rigby Barn (next page) in Mt. Pleasant are two historic barns scheduled to be on a tour of such buildings in Sanpete and Sanpete counties next year as part of the Bicycle Barnstorming Tour, so-sponsored by tbhe Utah Heritage Foundation and the Mormon Pioneer National Heritage Area.

(Photos by Doug Mottonen)

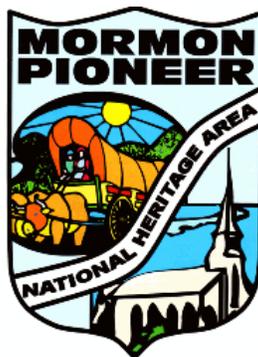
MT. PLEASANT — The Mormon Pioneer National Heritage Area* (MPNHA) is pleased to announce it has partnered with the Utah Heritage Foundation to promote awareness and appreciation of historic barns in Sanpete and Sevier counties.

The organizations will be co-sponsors of the Bicycle Barnstorming Tour, a three-day event to be held during the second week of June 2012.

The Tour will bring together cyclists, heritage and history buffs, and barn aficionados to explore how old barns contribute to the rustic aura of central Utah.

“These old barns are some of the most distinctive remnants of our pioneer heritage,” said Monte Bona, executive director of the MPNHA. “They reflect the area’s agricultural flavor, the industry and practicality of the early Mormon colonizers, and the pattern of settlement they established. By partnering with the Utah Heritage Foundation for next summer’s Barnstorming Tour, we can help people appreciate not only the barns themselves, but the characteristics they represent.”

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For three days, people will bicycle through locations in both counties on a guided tour of old barns. Participants will take photographs and make written descriptions of the barns. That information will be used to create a guide of old barns in central Utah. Current plans are for a printed guide as well as a smartphone app.

Next summer's Barnstorming Tour will be the first of what will hopefully become an annual event.

"The Barnstorming Tour will help achieve multiple goals of the Mormon Pioneer National Heritage Area," Bona said. "By listing old barns and creating the guide, we will be taking inventory of some of our important cultural resources. And the

tour will also allow us to display and interpret the area's heritage, promote recreation, and encourage heritage tourism — all of which will help develop the economic benefit of historic preservation."

The project has been funded in part by a grant from the Eccles Fund for Utah of the National Trust for Historic Preservation (NTHP), which gave \$5,000 to the MPNHA for the Barnstorming Tour.

Stephanie Meeks, president of the NTHP, said, "The National Trust for Historic Preservation is honored to provide a grant to the Mormon Pioneer National Heritage Area, which will use the funds to help preserve an important piece of our shared heritage."

For central Utah, old barns aren't just an important piece of the area's heritage, but a defining one.

"Barns are an iconic feature of this rural landscape, but they are fast disappearing," said Susan Crook, the Utah Heritage Foundation's central and southern Utah field representative. "The cycling event and barn guide are the first step in an effort to raise awareness about the plight of the disappearing barns that will hopefully lead to a campaign to raise money and labor to help cash-strapped barn owners catch up with deferred maintenance."

As barns are preserved and restored, and as the tour becomes an annual event, perhaps some of the buildings could be converted for use as heritage-related businesses or other economic ventures, Crook said.

As the event's coordinator, Crook said the tour is still in its planning stages, and she invites anyone interested in participating in any way — as riders, sponsors, donors, volunteers, or barn owners — to contact her.

Crook may be reached by calling her at (435) 773-5336, or by emailing her at susan@utahheritagefoundation.org.



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*The Mormon Pioneer Heritage Area (MPNHA) is a federally designated area of central and southern Utah running along the beautiful and historic U.S. Highway 89—including the scenic by-ways of Utah state routes 12 and 24 which both intersect with U.S. 89 and, together, form the MPNHA's Boulder Loop. The area includes the counties of Sanpete, Sevier, Piute, Wayne, Garfield and Kane.

The Utah Heritage Highway 89 Alliance is the local coordinating entity of the MPNHA. Its purpose is to preserve, tell and interpret the stories, history and heritage of the area, and to promote its culture and value.

www.mormonpioneerheritage.org