



## Territorial Rendezvous

By Don Coplin

Over the years, I have had the pleasure to attend twenty different Rendezvous, that have included territorial and national events. Each one is unique, but they have several things in common—great fun, great people, great food, great events, great speakers, and great worship services. The theme that moves through every event is brotherhood. How is brotherhood developed? It's developed when young bucks and old timers learn new skills, hear great stories, laugh with each other, and pray for each.

My days in Royal Rangers started back in the mid-1960s, and my adventure with FCF started with my invitation to an FCF Callout in 1971. It was the most difficult but exciting two days of my young life. I was totally worn out as I sat with the group of other candidates in total silence waiting to hear my name called. When they called my name, they took me aside to discuss my results. My dad, whose FCF name was Crow, had joined FCF the year before and was one of the staff. I remember as White Eagle, Bill Keffeler, went over my results, and he said, "Son, you have passed the requirements and are now a Frontiersmen member of the Marcus Whitman chapter." I was so excited that it almost felt like I was hearing Jesus say, "Well done good and faithful servant..."

The years that followed after joining FCF were spent mostly being involved in or leading Royal Rangers. I don't remember hearing about territorial rendezvous until the mid-1990s. National Rendezvous was too far away for a young guy like me. Once I went to my first territorial rendezvous, I was hooked. How could I have missed any of these in the past? This was like going to the best district powwow but on steroids with an 1800s theme.

I couldn't decide what the best part was. Was it the many varieties of food cooked over open fires? Was it the fellowship around the campsites and fires? Was it watching the craftsmen and their trades? Was it the many events that allowed me to try things that I had never experienced? Was it the great worship services and time at the altar? They were all great. I saw so many great things at the services. Young buck's and old timer's lives were changed. People were healed. One thing I quickly realized was that I needed a black powder rifle with supplies and good throwing knife and hawk. My wife was so surprised when I told her what I wanted for the next Christmas.

I was surprised how accurate the representation of the participants was at these events. When I compared how little I had versus what others had for outfits, lodges, and supplies, I was somewhat embarrassed. I found out very quickly why this group was a brotherhood. When they saw that I had need for items, they all began to pitch in and provide me items. One provided a knife, and another provided a necklace. Next, someone gave me a shirt and a wood drinking cup. If that wasn't enough, there were trading blankets where I could get items just by trading even though I didn't have much money. I was off and running to having the items that I needed. If I couldn't trade for something, then I was taught how to make it myself and supplies were provided.

I've had many fond memories from past rendezvous. In 2001, I went through Wilderness Vigil with my oldest son, Drew (Helpful Otter) at our territorial rendezvous in the Blue Mountains of Northeastern Oregon. This was an exciting year for me. In 2013, Trappers (Northwest) and Mountainmen (Southwest) had a combined

territorial rendezvous at Fort Bridger, WY. This is where Jim Bridger and Louis Vasquez established a supply station for the travelers on the Oregon/California Trail and Mormon Trail. Another great rendezvous memory was the Colonial (Northeast) territorial rendezvous in Greene, NY. When I saw the rows of a hundred lodges and three hundred participants, I was amazed. There was barely enough time to get around to meet all the participants and look at their trade blankets. Their company store was one of the best, and I purchased many great items from that store.

Make sure that you invite a young buck to a territorial rendezvous this year. He will forever thank you, and he will be the first to make sure that you attend the next one. Life is short; rendezvous are great. Make sure you set aside the time to go to your Rendezvous, and others if you can. As our FCF national coordinator, John Hembree says, "Experience the time of your life." When you see him, tell him, "Don, sent me," and he will give you a big smile and a warm handshake.

Territory	Region	Date	Location
<b>Trappers</b>	Northwest	6/29/23 - 7/2/23	The Dalles, Oregon
<b>Plainsmen</b>	South Central	7/12/23 - 7/14/23	The Range, Manzano, NM
<b>Mountainmen</b>	Southwest	7/17/23 - 7/21/23	Indian Hill Ranch, Tehachapi, CA
<b>Voyagers &amp; Rivermen</b>	Great Lakes & Gulf	10/5/23 - 10/8/23	Camp Dubois, Wood River, IL
<b>Colonials</b>	Northeast	10/5/23 - 10/8/23	NY District Camp, Greene, NY
<b>Explorers</b>	North Central	10/5/23 - 10/8/23	Camp Jo-Ota, Clarence, MO
<b>Riflemen</b>	Southeast	10/19/23 - 10/22/23	Camp Wilderness, Ft. Meade, FL

## Websites:

Only the Trappers, Plainsmen, and Mountainmen have information on their websites for their events because these events will be held in June or July. The other territories will post event packets and open registration later this summer.

- Trappers: <https://www.nwrrr.com/>
- Plainsmen: <https://scr-royalrangers.org/>
- Mountainmen: <http://swroyalrangers.org/>
- Voyagers: <http://www.gloyalrangers.org/>
- Rivermen: <https://gulregionrr.org/>
- Colonials: <https://www.northeastregion.org/>
- Explorers: no region website
- Riflemen: <https://southeastregionroyalrangers.com/>



Royal Rangers Leaders

