THIS TRAIL WAS LAID OUT AND IS MAINTAINED BY THE TRAIL COMMITTEE WITH THE SUPPORT AND ENCOURAGEMENT OF ALL KEWANEE.

TRAIL COMMITTEE:

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WE WELCOME YOU TO THE NEW BOY SCOUT TRAIL
THE KEWANEE STAGE COACH AND POIN EXPRESS TRAIL
DO HOPE THAT YOU WILL ENJOY YOURSELF....
POINTS OF INTEREST ALONG THE KENANEE STAGE
COACH AND PONY EXPRESS TRAIL.

A. STARTING POINT. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . FRANCIS PARK.

1. Although the Trail starts at Francis Park entrance, there is a wonderful history with Mr. Frederick Francis's house. It is named "WOODLAND PALACE", and is now a museum.

2. Mr. Francis was an unusual man, he was a mechanical genius, poet, a nature lover, and above all he was an individual.
   a. He was the first Kewanee man to graduate from the University of Illinois. (1878)
   b. He invented the "hair spring" for the Elgin Watch Company.
   c. He worked out a Mathematical problem that puzzled scholars the world over. The problem took 12 years to finish.

3. Woodland Palace is built almost entirely of brick and stone. All the work being done by Mr. Francis, not one cent was paid for labor. The materials for the house were, for the most part, transported from Kewanee on the front end of the bicycle. On this old bike, Mr. Francis became a familiar figure along the road to Kewanee. He was usually barefooted, bare-headed, and without a shirt and wearing light trousers, regardless of the season or the weather.
   a. The foundation for WOODLAND PALACE was laid in 1889.
   b. It features it's own water filtering system.
   c. It has the first home air-conditioning system.

   d. Probably the first home with automatic storm doors and windows and screens.
   e. The doors have no hinges...operate on wood pins and gears.
   f. There are many more innovations, too numerous to mention here.

   KUSTER MOUND. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . SITE No. 1
   As you face WEST from the bridge, the mound is visible...500 yards.

   KUSTER MOUND GROUP. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . SITE No. 2
   More mounds clearly indicated by rock piles.

   STAGE COACH ROBBERY and HIDDEN TREASURE . . SITE No. 3

   A tragedy and still unsolved mystery, occurred on this very site, when a gang of outlaws held up the stage and shot the driver. The driver was Mort Hughes. It happened this way:
   There was a rumor of a hoodlum gang from Wisconsin in the North area of Kewanee. On this particular run, Hughes carried a chest containing what was described as "Treasure". He knew that if the hoodlums were in the area they might try to steal the chest. At an unknown point east of the robbery site, Hughes stopped his stage, unloaded the chest, and buried it. As he approached this site the gang sprang out and halted the coach. Without waiting they opened fire on the helpless driver. Hughes was killed instantly, taking the location of the buried treasure to the grave. No one has ever found the treasure since this tragedy in the late 1860's.

   For many years the remains of the old coach remained on this site rotting away.
E. SITE NO. 4
Main trail to South Johnson-Sauk Lake Scout Camping Grounds.

F. SITE NO. 5
A prominent and ancient Indian Camp Site. The entire area abounds with camp sites. In the Indian days this area was heavily wooded and covered with prairie grasses. The Indians usually selected a camp site on a ridge and near water. Following a heavy rain, many arrowheads and other Indian relics can be found.

G. SITE NO. 6
Another prominent Indian Camp Ground.

H. SITE NO. 7
Historical Marker...Read Inscription (East of marker...the old Andrew farm...formerly a stage stopping point.)

I. SITE NO. 8
THE FYLE MOUND
This mound is the largest in the area. We suspect a chief is buried here along with his worldly possessions. It was the custom for an Indian to be buried with his possessions so he would have a bountiful life in the "HAPPY HUNTING GROUNDS." Only a Chief would have enough property to create a mound as large as this.

J. SITE NO. 9
PONY MAIL ROUTE

As you leave Messmore Hill, at the triangle, you will walk the route of the Pony Mail Riders. These hearty men would pick up the mail from the coaches and speedily deliver it to Cambridge and points West. Many of Henry County Pony Mail Riders became the first Pony Express Riders for WELLS FARGO.

Next to Buffalo Bill the next famous rider of all was "PONY BOB HASLAM" Relatives of Pony Bob still reside in Kewanee, the FRANK RASH FAMILY...Pony Bob holds the record for the fastest mail run......120 miles in 8 hours and 20 minutes. He was to have 13 changes along the way, but the Indians reached relays before him. They wiped out the station, forcing Pony Bob to ride on. It was during this ride that Pony Bob was shot through the jaw by an Indian Arrow, knocking out three teeth. Pony Bob was the first rider to deliver the news of LINCOLN'S election to Denver. Following his exciting two years with WELLS FARGO, he joined the BUFFALO BILL WILD WEST SHOW.
K......SITE NO. 10      GREGG YOUNG FARM

The farm house, to the right of the trail, was another well known Stage Coach Stop Over and Tavern. In the basement was located a bar, the main floor was used as a dining area, and the upstairs was quarters for overnite stops.

An unusual feature of the House was a hidden stairway in the back. This hidden stairway led to sleeping quarters above the kitchen. This area was for the driver.

On the left side of the trail there once stood a huge barn built into the side of the hill. This structure was large enough to accommodate a coach and team under the roof. Horses were rested and fed here. The barn burned many years ago.

L......SITE NO. 11      LOOKOUT PINE (OR LONE PINE)

In the 1840's when Coaches were many up and down the trail business thrived.

One of the unsung hero's of the Pioneer days was the "DRUMMER". A drummer was a salesman who sold his wares from town to town, farm to farm. Through the efforts of these men, up-to-date tools, factory made articles were distributed and introduced to the pioneers.

Many of the early drummers started stores which have grown into the modern mercantile establishments we know today.

Bear the LONE TREE PINE, a drummer is buried. We do not know how he died, or why he is buried there. This another mystery of the trail.
This was the site of two attempted Stage Coach Robberies.

Morris Ellenwood was an expert horseman. In the 1840's he drove the Stage that stopped at COSNER'S CORNER. Onlookers were always amazed when he pulled the teams up to a halt. Because Morris had only ONE ARM.

When the coach, traveling North Easterly from COSNER CORNER slowed up to ford MUD CREEK, a hold-up man stopped it. There were no bridges at that time across the Creek. It was dusk, Morris whipped out a twist of tobacco and threatened to shoot. The trick worked. The hoodlum slunk away. But the story doesn't end here. Later Ellenwood told of his experience in a Kewanee store with several listeners present.

"YOU MEAN TO SAY YOU DRIVE THAT STAGE unarmed?" one man asked him.

"YES, I DO." answered Morris.

Ellenwood left the store a bit uneasy. He realized this thing could happen again with a far different outcome. On the very next run, as the coach slowed down at MUD CREEK crossing a masked hold-up man appeared. The robber yelled at Morris and Morris Shot. When the mask was removed, Morris recognized the man as a listener in the store who heard him say that he didn't carry a gun.

This is of historical interest, although it's a recent discovery. A stone from this area was found to have very pure gold traces in it. Rock was quarried from this site to cover a driveway from the site on the map.
to the house. Mrs. Ellen Winters picked up a stone and took it to California with her. A rock expert examined it and with the results that he found, traces of Gold was found through the stone.

0. SITE NO. 11. COSNER'S CORNER

There was a time when Cosner's Corner was a not so-quiet place. Jake's Tavern, on the main thoroughfare from Peoria north, rang with all the zing of a frontier center of activity. It was a stage stop, postal center, with Jake presiding. Pony Mail riders met the stage in relays and carried the mail on east and points north.

In Jake's Tavern there were three rooms upstairs, two rooms and a bedroom down stairs. Travelers were never turned away. When big beds filled up, cut came the trundle beds from underneath. So long as there was floor space there was always room for another sleeper.

Sally Cosner's reputation as a cook was well known up and down the old stage coach road.

Jacob Cosner got along well with the Indians. In the late 1840's they were not savage or warring in this section. Jake always fed them. One day a caravan of moving Indians halted at Jake's. There had been sickness in the tribe, and death, including a chief.

"COULD THEY BURY THEIR DEAD SOMEPLACE?" they asked.

Jake led them to a Hillside near the timber southeast of the house. Time has hidden traces of the mounds.

HISTORY OF THE KEMAHEE STAGE COACH AND PONY EXPRESS TRAIL.

The history of this trail is very interesting and exciting one. It dates back to the early 1840's, the original trail being blazed by the Sauk or Sac Indian tribes. Among the earlier trails, marking the Illinois County, both Indian and white although as a rule the latter utilized the experience of the former; it is only necessary to trace a few of the more important historically.

While not the oldest by many years, the Sauk Trail is in some respects one of the most interesting and clearly marked. It formed the pathway along which each recurring year the Sac and Foxes travelled from their great village on the banks of the Mississippi to Malden in Canada, for the purpose of receiving their annuities from the British Government. It was a broad trail, the large number of men, women and children passing along it with ponies dragging their tepees and household goods leaving a wide mark across the prairies. It followed as nearly a straight line as the nature of the country would permit eastward through Fort Dearborn to Vincennes crossing the then Hubbard Trail outside of Fort Dearborn.

In later history, it became the westward artery for trappers, soldiers, settlers and the mail. Covered wagons traveled it to lands beyond the Mississippi.

The 49'ers traveled it to California, New Englanders
used it to settle Kansas with abolitionists and negro slaves used it to escape from Missouri to Indiana.

As late as 1883, it is said by competent observers, the marks of the passage were still visible in many places.

Location and History of Kewanee.

Kewanee is located 130 miles southwest of Chicago, on the main line of the CHICAGO, BURLINGTON and QUINCY Railroad, and on U.S. Highway 34 and State Highway 78 and 81. It is 50 miles northwest of Peoria and 50 miles southeast of Davenport, Rock Island and Moline.

Kewanee was founded in 1854. It was called Berrian for a short time and the name was changed to Kewanee, in honor of the Sac and Fox Indian Tribes who roamed the territory in early times. The word "Kewanee" means "PRAIRIE CHICKEN". The Prairie Chicken was here in great numbers and formed a large part of the food of the Indian Tribes, so when the town was plotted, the "Kewanee" was chosen from the Sac language. Kewanee was incorporated as a village in 1866 and as a city in 1897.

RESERVATIONS are required, and must be made at headquarters building located at 322 North Main Street, at least two weeks in advance. Please include Two (2) alternate hike dates.

RESERVATIONS should include: Troop or Post No....(town) of...(Council). B.S.A.

Each UNIT must be accompanied by a leader or a qualified adult. 100 word report is required after trail is taken.

REGISTRATION FEE-- -- $1.00 for each participant including patch.

CAMPING FACILITIES are available upon written request. Please indicate number who will want these facilities.

MEDALS of Official Kewanee Stage Coach Pony Express Trail are available at headquarters at $1.50 each.

WE WELCOME ALL 2nd. class Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts and over, to this new trail. Kewanee is a friendly city and we are confident you will enjoy the Trail and the Facilities offered in our city.

The length of the trail: Approximately 19 miles long.

THINGS TO SEE AND DO: There are many things to see and do on the trail and in the area. Kewanee has one of the finest public park systems in the state, complete with all facilities for swimming, playing, etc. Information can be maintained at the headquarters. Also all scouts can find many interesting nature studies towards their nature merit badge.

Other groups interested in Historical Trail Hiking may also obtain permission to take the hike.
RULES OF THE TRAIL.

A. IT IS INTENDED FOR BOY SCOUTS, EXPLORES AND THEIR LEADERS AND SENIOR GIRL SCOUTS.

B. EACH PERSON MUST CARRY HIS OWN FOOD AND WATER ON THE TRAIL, THERE IS NONE AVAILABLE ALONG THE WAY.

C. YOU MUST COMPLETE THE TRAIL HIKE IN ONE DAY.

D. EACH SCOUT AND SCOUTER MUST WEAR HIS OR HER UNIFORM. THE TEE SHIRTS AND SHORTS ARE PERMISSIBLE.

E. EACH SCOUT MUST CARRY FIRST AID SUPPLIES SUCH AS ADHESIVE TAPE, GAUZE AND ANTISEPTIC.

F. THE SCOUT OATH AND LAW IS THE LAW OF THE TRAIL.

G. PLEASE refrain from damaging or destroying trees, plants or other objects.

H. NO SHEATH KNIVES, OR AXES ARE PERMITTED ON THE TRAIL.

I. THIS HIKE IS RELATIVELY EASY AND SHOULD PROVIDE A GREAT DEAL OF PLEASURE TO THE HIKER AS WELL AS ACQUAINT HIM WITH THE HISTORY OF THIS AREA.

J. THERE IS MUCH NATURAL BEAUTY TO BE ENJOYED.

HAVE FUN