

Lincoln Ride Recreated

County Resident Rides With TV Crew In Washington, D.C.

By Nicholas L. Dean, ndeans@post-journal.com

POSTED: September 14, 2010



Article Photos

County resident Jack Peacock, owner of Stagecoach West in Irving, participated in a recreation ride Sunday in Washington, D.C. The event was organized by Best of America by Horseback, a satellite and cable television show which airs on the RFD-TV network.

Submitted photo

Fact Box

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Tom Seay

"Best of America by Horseback" host

WASHINGTON, D.C. - County resident Jack Peacock toured Washington, D.C. by horseback Sunday, taking the route Abraham Lincoln traveled while in office.

The event was organized by the hosts of "Best of America by Horseback," a satellite and cable television show which airs on the RFD-TV network.

Peacock is an Irving business owner, having owned and operated Stagecoach West for 31 years. A longtime friend of the hosts of the show, Tom and Pat Seay, Peacock was able to be one of the few people to participate in the ride.

Starting out at Lincoln's summer home, the group followed the same route to the White House which Lincoln took daily while president.

"It was just incredible," Peacock said Monday. "It was a very special day and was certainly one of the highlights of my life."

According to Peacock, the trek was filmed for a documentary to be called "Presidents and Their Horses."

As explained by Tom Seay, host of the horsebacking show, the event wasn't initially going to be a ride, but just a photo shoot.

"We just wanted to take some shots at the Lincoln cottage and then maybe one in front of the White House, but it just got out of control real quick," Seay said. "The Marine Corps from California called and asked if they could come with their Wild Mustangs, so they came all the way from across the country for this ride."

Now much changed from Lincoln's day, Seay said the route took the riders through a rough part of D.C. - for which they had a police escort. That was almost unnecessary though, as Seay said the residents took to the streets to respectfully witness the event. The site of the U.S. Marines traveling by horseback had people awestruck, he explained.

"There wasn't a single heckle or jeer or anything like that," Seay said. "People were coming out, some putting their hands over their hearts for the flag. They were in reverence of the Marines and their flags, in part, I think, because of the horses."

Upon arriving at the White House, the group was swarmed by tourists, Seay said, making it impossible to take the staged photographs they had hoped to shoot.

Still, that ended up being a highlight of the ride - as meeting and talking with people made for some memorable moments.

"One lady just broke down in tears and gave us a hug," Seay said. "It was a great opportunity to be with the best of the best. It wasn't the military you see on TV. It was the military that was real and that was right in front of them. It was as if, all of a sudden, all the politics eroded and washed away. It was just incredible.

"You couldn't have staged this," Seay continued. "The public came out and there were people from China and Equador and all they wanted was just to touch the horses and see the real U.S. Marines. I've been doing this show for six years and I was not prepared for the love or adoration for the horses and the people on the horses and what a difference that made. I was just not prepared."

Though the ride took the group about two hours, it was probably a little quicker for Lincoln in his day - not having to navigate the city's side streets. In total, Peacock said he

and the others spent about five hours on their horses, from the cottage to the White House and finally to the Mall.

Peacock is part of the Chautauqua County Sheriff's Office's mounted division. Seay said he asked Peacock to participate because he's "the perfect all-around American citizen," a successful businessman and family person who has served in the military and loves horses.

"It was an absolutely wonderful thing to do and a very emotional place to go to," Peacock said. "I'm a little bit of a history buff, but more just a Civil War kind of guy. I guess you could say I'm just a card-carrying American and I love anything about this country and anything like this was such a unique opportunity."