

Brief History of WPHPA

The organization actually began when a small group of concerned people got together to help salvage the Bordeaux Trading Post cemetery. The site had been discovered when a local farmer leveled a field on a hillside near Lingle in 1980. When a request for funds to protect or salvage the site was rejected by the State, the group worked with the Goshen County Museum and received a grant from the Humanities Counsel to take record and salvage what was left of the cemetery. About that time another site, what turned out to be the Ash Point Trading Post was discovered, again, when a farmer was leveling a field. And again, the group responded and the same group responded and recorded and salvaged a portion of the site. All this activity created a lot interest in the community and it soon became apparent that the area was extremely rich in both historic and prehistoric sites many of which were suffering from erosion and development. No entity in the area other than the newly formed group was available to conduct any kind of historic preservation activities. So, the group incorporated as a chapter of the Wyoming Archeological Society. The activities of the group continued to expand until some of those activities grew beyond the scope of the archeological chapter. It was then decided that a special organization was needed that addressed a wider variety of activities so the group incorporated under the name of the Western Plains Historic Preservation Association in 1990. WPHPA continues to grow in the kinds of activities it promotes and sponsors and in membership.

Accomplishments of the group since inception in 1980:

Salvage of numerous archeological and historic sites that were in imminent danger of being totally lost. The age of the sites range from 11,000 year old mammoth sites to recent history and all period in between.

Numerous educational activities including sponsorship of speakers, tours for both the public and educational groups, especially the public schools and adult education.

Built and maintains a repository of historic and archeological records and information pertinent to the area including a good oral history program.

Built and maintains a museum to share information about the area with the public.

Established and maintains a high quality summer work program for area youths – over the years have brought almost \$1 million into the community in grants that is used for the benefit of area youth.

WPHPA:

Was instrumental in acquisition of the Hell Gap site for the Wyoming Archeological Foundation.

Acquired the Brownrigg historic site and preservation efforts for that property are currently underway.

Has provided data for numerous college students involved in historic and archeology research projects in the area.

Has become a resource for information needed by industry and government agencies for land development purposes.