

# Phi Alpha Theta Takes on the Oregon Trail

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In the Fall of each year, the USU chapter of the Phi Alpha Theta National History Honor Society takes a trip to historical or cultural locations in the area. Previous years saw a trip to Blanding and visits to religious centers in Salt Lake City. This year, the club explored Western themes when they visited Montpelier, Idaho on October 3.

Along the way, the group stopped in Preston, Idaho at the Bear River Massacre site. There, former Chairman of the Northwestern Band of the Shoshone Nation, Darren Parry, told students more about the massacre.

“Experiencing the Bear River Massacre site with Professor Darren Parry was a highlight for all of us,” said Mustafa Banister, faculty advisor for the club. “We not only reflected on the tragedy that took place there but also learned about the ongoing development of the monument itself, an experience that exposed our students to local history alongside the fascinating debates involved in creating public history projects.”

Upon arrival in Montpelier, students explored both the Oregon Trail Museum and the Butch Cassidy Robbery Bank Museum, for a more in depth understanding of what people in this time period experienced. “It was fun to learn how the Wild West is part of local history,” said Madison Harris, a Phi Alpha Theta officer. “The museums we went to were super interactive, which made the history feel more real. I’ve been to Montpelier so many times before, but the trip helped me see it in a new way!”