

## Featured Wagon



### BUCK BOARD PHAETON

This much Americanized variety of the phaeton has a main and rear groom seat mounted on the popular buckboard, accommodating two passengers and a groom. It was built at Glen Falls, New York, at the turn of the nineteenth century. It was restored to like new condition in 2002. It has a rounding bubble top that folds open for fair weather driving. There is a wooden dash with patent leather covered sides and grab handles. The front face of the top has patent leather with brass trim. There are patent leather extended sides on the front of the leather-covered top that act as fenders when it is folded back. The upholstery

is a diamond-tufted tan colored cloth, and there is a matching liner inside the top. The wooden floorboards are arched from the front axle to the rear axle providing suspension for the riders. There is a window in the back along with a leather-covered groom seat indicating this vehicle was driven by the well-to-do. Under the groom seat and around the floorboards there is an iron railing. The beveled glass lamps are kerosene and have a red jeweled lens for a taillight.

# WESTWARD THE WAGONS

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A small gathering took a step back in time on Saturday, July 26, at Eli Anderson's Wagon Land Adventure in Bothwell. A celebration was a dream come true for Anderson as he hosted the National Stagecoach and Freight Wagon Association (NSFWA) meeting.

The morning started off with a continental breakfast, followed by a welcome speech by the NSFWA. Guests then toured Eli's fantastic collection of over 200 wagons, carriages, buggies and sleighs. This collection housed in Bothwell is said to be the largest collection of horse-drawn vehicles in North America.



Members of the National Stagecoach and Freight Wagon Association gathered in Bothwell this weekend to tour Eli Anderson's extensive wagon collection. Pictured from left, Doug Hansen of Letcher, S.D.; Rawhide Johnson of Cody, Wyo.; Eli Anderson; Gerry Groenewold of Grandforks, N.D.; and Tom Henrich from Richland, Wash.

A few favorites among the youth present were a hearse, complete with a coffin, a Wells Fargo stagecoach and a town coach that was reminiscent of a carriage seen in the movie 'Phantom of the Opera.'

Activities included several regionally focused historical presentations, including Betsy Watry on the Gilmer & Salsbury Stage Line and Michael Zimmer on

freighting from Corinne on the Montana Trail. Presentations were a wealth of information crammed into a short amount of time that left listeners anxious for more.



This wagon in Anderson's Shop is being restored it will be added to the 200-plus horse-drawn wagons already a part of his impressive assortment.

Shane and Heather Strong attended the event and were fascinated to learn more about how the jerk line was used on a 14-20 mule team pulling the gigantic freight wagons. They even went home and looked up Youtube videos to see how a team of that size was handled in real life!

Heather said, "It was very interesting to learn that Corinne was a hub of freighting activity once the railroad was completed at Promontory. We learned the railroad dramatically changed freight business and they could get in up to four trips per year hauling supplies to the gold fields of Montana if the weather held out, as opposed to one trip by steamboat up the Missouri River. Our family was amazed at Eli's awesome collection, and we really enjoyed learning more and seeing all the work he has done to preserve so much of our history."

The Montana trail follows the present I-15 for the most part. Promontory City and Blue Creek were also areas considered

as a supply stations for muleskinners, gold seekers, supply wagons and anyone heading up the Montana trail. Although some early Mormons still took wagons of produce to Montana, after about 1870, the bulk of supplies heading north were handled by professional freighters.

When asked how he decided which wagons to restore, Eli said: "Well, I have one now that I've owned for 25 years. I've noticed what age people are dying these days and got thinking I need to get this wagon done!"



This wagon was the first wagon Anderson restored.

Included in Eli's extensive horse drawn vehicle collection is the first wagon he obtained, a mountain wagon. Eli purchased this wagon as a teen from a cousin. One of the wheels collapsed from age when he picked it up and he spent his entire life's savings at the time to hire Mel DeWitt in Moscow, Idaho, to rebuild the wheels. Paying close attention to detail and using very few tools, Eli restored this wagon. Realizing that not all wagons are the same, he has spent his entire life searching for, acquiring and preserving horse-drawn vehicles for future generations to see and appreciate.

Another early piece in Eli's collection is a beet wagon that was used to haul sugar beets here in the Bear River Valley and was actually constructed locally and restored from Douglas fir from the railroad trestle that crossed the Great Salt Lake in Promontory. The sides of the beet wagon are hinged to allow the wagon box to dump its load from the side at the beet dump.

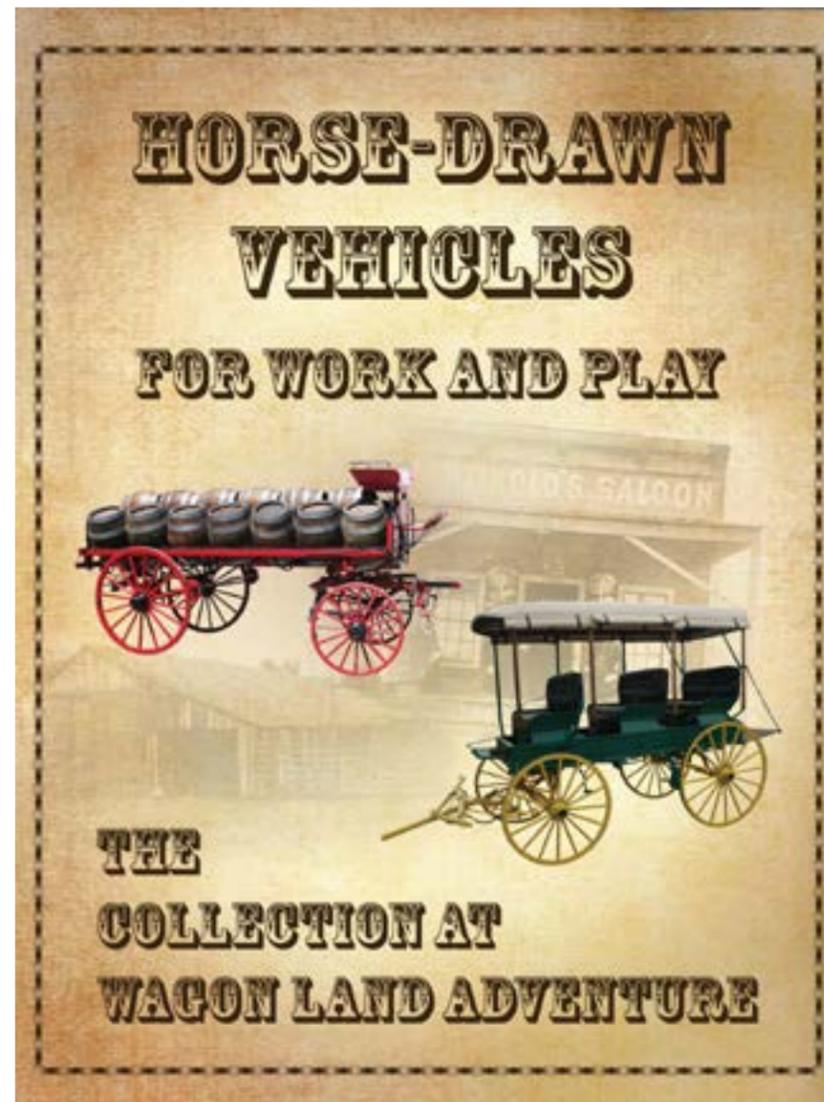
Eli tried to get this wagon while in the second grade but had to wait 25 years until the Berchtold family let him have it. From that first attempt in 1962 to final restoration it was 50 years.

There are other wagons in Eli's collection that were used locally, as well. A lovely specimen of a C-top florist delivery wagon formally owned by country music star, Buck Owens of the famed Hee Haw TV show is one of them.

The mission of the Wagon Land Adventure Foundation is to provide an authentic and educational experience of the life and times of the pioneer horse-drawn era.

Visitors on Saturday definitely felt as though they had stepped back in time as they enjoyed this Pioneer Day event. A delicious barbecue lunch was provided by Eli and his wife, Carol, who noted she was grateful there was a cool breeze for the events on that hot summer day. Eli just floated around enjoying himself immensely as host to this meeting to help others learn more about freight wagons and stagecoaches among other horse-drawn vehicles.

To schedule a tour or to purchase Eli's newly published book: "Horse Drawn Vehicles for Work and Play: The Collection at Wagon Land



Three years in the making, a book highlighting the horse-drawn collection of Eli Anderson and Wagon Land Adventure has been completed. The book, over 300 pages, has beautiful color pictures of over 300 vehicles. Eli Anderson provided most of the text, and Sharon Hopkins made sense of and edited the text. Roland Bringhurst layed out the book, photographed the wagons and edited the pictures. Many others helped in moving wagons for photographs and some editing of pictures. Grants from the Utah Division of Arts and Museums and Box Elder County assisted with this project.

This book is available for purchase through Amazon or by sending \$40.00 + \$5.00 (Shipping and Handling) to Wagon Land Adventure; 264 North 900 East; Brigham City, UT 84321. Checks should be made out to: Wagon Land Adventure.

You may also contact Eli Anderson (435-279-6422) or Roland Bringhurst (435-730-3368) to order.



## Friends of Wagon Land Adventure Membership Categories

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Amount Enclosed \$ \_\_\_\_\_

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- Please contact me about endowment contributions or planned giving.
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Mail to: Wagon Land Adventure Foundation; P.O. Box 394; Tremonton, UT 84337

**Wagon Land Adventure is a 501C3 organization, your donation is tax deductible.**