



THE ARKANSAS POST GAZETTE

NEWSLETTER OF ARKANSAS POST NATIONAL MEMORIAL, GILLETT, AKANSAS

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Louisiana Purchase Bicentennial & Colonial Arkansas to be the focus of 2003 park events and programs

In conjunction with state-wide commemoration, Arkansas Post will be celebrating the 200th anniversary of the Louisiana Purchase during 2003.

In addition to the Colonial Encampment in February, interpretive programs are scheduled for every Saturday from April through September. These programs will concentrate on the Colonial period, and may include living history presentations and demonstrations. Topics scheduled include the flags of Arkansas Post; colonial survival; the Colbert Raid during the Revolutionary War, and the French Marines at the Post. The Ghosts of the Past program in the fall of 2003 will also be concentrated on events surrounding the Louisiana Purchase and it's effect on the people of Arkansas Post.

2003 promises to be an exciting time at the Post as we celebrate and educate visitors about the Louisiana Purchase!

Ghosts of the Past 2002

Young and old are invited to participate Saturday October 26, 2002, in the 8th annual "Ghosts of the Past" program. Events of nearly 300 years will come to life as living historians and volunteers recreate colonial music, French soldiers, Spanish explorers, Civil War events and much more. Free guided tours will follow the luminaria-lined path in the old town site where participants will have the opportunity to take a walk through the history of Arkansas Post. Scenes planned for the program include French Marines of 1749, the naming of Dewitt, and a Civil War wedding.

As this is an outdoor program visitors are encouraged to wear comfortable walking shoes and warm clothing. All tours are wheel chair accessible. In case of rain, the program will move to the auditorium of the park visitor center. Each one-hour tour will start from the visitor center beginning at 5 p.m. and depart every 15 minutes with the last tour leaving at 8:30 p.m. Tours are limited to 25 people; therefore, **reservations are strongly recommended and may be made by calling the park at 870-548-2207.**



Superintendent's Scribblin's



There are sure a lot of activities at the Post these days! We are shooting the new orientation film and that has occupied a fair amount my time, but from what I've seen thus far, it will be a great presentation. We are also finished with the final draft of the new General Management Plan. It will be sent to those of you on our mailing list and anyone interested in reviewing and commenting on the plans for the park for the next 10-20 years. If you are not on the list or have not received a copy of the draft plan by December 1, and want to participate in the review process, please call the park or email me at arpo_superintendent@nps.gov and request a copy. As you can see from articles in this issue, the interpretive program is geared up to do both Ghosts of the Past (Oct 26) and the Colonial Encampment (Feb 22-23). We would love to have a good crowd of visitors for both events (see the details in the specific articles.)

One happening that is particularly important for everyone in Arkansas County and Lee, Monroe and Phillips Counties for that matter, is the recent incorporation of the Delta Rivers Regional Tourism Council, Inc (DRRTC). I have been involved with this group from the beginning and I am happy to say that it is finally becoming a reality. You may be familiar with the 4-County Tourism Feasibility Study that was conducted last spring; if not, let me recount what occurred. The study included tourism-related attractions and businesses as well as potential tourist facilities and activities. After a whirlwind trip through the 4-county area, consultants developed a report detailing their findings and recommendations. Among the recommendations they made was the establishment of an advocacy group to promote tourism in the region and that led us to establish the DRRTC.

The DRRTC will provide a central location for all area communities, attractions, businesses and potential tourism activities to meet and discuss their individual concerns. In addition, we hope to pool our efforts to attract more tourists to the area and increase the effectiveness of our promotional programs.

Tourism has not been high on the list of community planners in the area and the economic benefits have often been overlooked. Aside from the hunters and fishermen that frequent the region, the economy is primarily related to farming and agricultural pursuits. This focus has resulted in few lodging facilities and few restaurants for travelers outside the major gateways of Brinkley and Helena. Most support businesses (stores, repair shops, etc.) cater to locals. There is nothing wrong with this focus; it just ignores the potential that could be derived from visitors and the economic boost that they bring.

The feasibility study identified many possibilities for new tourist activities and businesses to offer these services. Everything from eco-tourism (bird watch tours, wildlife tours, guided canoe trips, etc.) to heritage tourism (historic buildings, Civil War battlefields, craft demonstrations and sales, etc.) was considered. Adaptive use of existing facilities was also recommended such as using duck lodges during times when they are normally closed. One of the more interesting suggestions, to me, was the development of demonstration or "dude" farms. Imagine a bunch of urbanites that think cotton only comes on bolts working in a cotton field during harvest or planting. Or them finding out that rice doesn't all come from the orient. The potential is endless and it will be incumbent on us all to support those activities that will bring visitors to the area and extend their stay. For a comparatively small investment in effort and money, the harvest of tourism dollars can be great.

You might wonder why Arkansas Post National Memorial is advocating increased tourism and it is quite simple – the National Park Service has been delegated by Congress to manage the Lower Mississippi Delta Initiative effort. This program was legislated to foster economic self-sufficiency in the Delta, which includes the areas along the Mississippi River in the states of Arkansas, Mississippi, Louisiana and Tennessee. So officially we have a mandate, but unofficially we are a member of the community and want to do whatever possible to assist our neighbors.

I urge you to consider joining in this effort. Your thoughts and suggestions are wanted as well as your membership. The DRRTC is brand new so membership procedures are not yet in place but will be in the near future. For more information about the DRRTC you can contact me by telephone (870-548-2207) or at the email address above and as soon as details become available, I will send them to you.

Edward E. Wood, Jr.



The French Marines have landed at Poste Aux Arkansas

This fall the park acquired reproduction uniforms and equipment to portray French Marines stationed at Arkansas Post in the mid-1700s. Steve provided a French Marine program at the state museum's Heritage Day in late September.

This coming summer, a French Marine musket demonstration will be a regular part of the Colonial Arkansas programs being held in conjunction with the bicentennial of the Louisiana Purchase.



Feu! [fire] - French Marine / Park Guide Steve Edwards demonstrates the flintlock musket.



A Successful Day at the Fishing Derby



Weighing in



2002 Children's Fishing Derby winners

Fishing derby

The fifth annual annual fishing derby in mid-June was a fun and enjoyable day. The summer weather cooperated with us to make a comfortable morning for fishing. Over sixty children participated in the event and they could be seen on all sides of the park lake.

This years winners were: (Pictured Left to Right) **Jake Currey**, second place of Stuttgart, ; **Alex Moreno** of Dumas, first place; and **Ryan Hefley** of Monticello, second place.

Staff Notes



Administrative Officer Pat Grove presents Superintendent Ed Wood with a certificate marking 30 years of government service.

Old Timer(s) at the Post

In mid- September, Administrative Officer Pat Grove arranged a surprise staff meeting in order for a presentation honoring Superintendent Ed Wood's thirty years working government service with the National Park Service.

Before the cake was all eaten, Ed surprised Pat with a presentation honoring *her* thirty years service with the United States Government.



Turnabout is fair play: Superintendent Ed Wood presents Administrative Officer Pat Grove with a certificate marking 30 years of government service.

Arrivals and departures

The summer of 2002 saw both an addition to and a subtraction from the Arkansas Post family. Interpretive Ranger Eric Leonard transferred from Fort Smith NHS, and Resource Management Specialist Kevin Eads transferred to Pea Ridge National Military Park.

After six years as a member of the staff, resource management specialist Kevin Eads transferred to Pea Ridge, leaving his beloved ticks and alligators behind. While the insect population of the Ozarks isn't as bloodthirsty as here on the delta, Pea Ridge will provide Kevin with a number of challenges.



Eric Leonard

Eric Leonard transferred from Fort Smith National Historic Site to Arkansas Post in early August. A native of Washington State, Eric began working with the National Park Service in 1995, while a college student, at Fort Larned National Historic Site. While at Fort Smith, Eric completed a Master's degree from the University of Oklahoma. While at Fort Smith, his area of study focused on Judge Parker, the federal court, and the gallows. Eric's wife, Liz, is currently finishing up a degree at the University of Arkansas. After the hustle and bustle of an urban park like Fort Smith, Eric is enjoying the friendlier pace of the Post.

New Orientation Film, “Arkansas Post: Echoes of the Past” Underway

The current orientation film shown in the visitor center, nearly twenty years old, is outdated in a number of ways. Shown on a 16mm film projector system, the film only begins to fully cover the story of Arkansas Post, and does not reflect current research into the site and its history.

After several years of planning, filming has begun on a new interpretive film: “Echoes of the Past.” Principal photography began at the end of August with a weekend of filming at Fort Toulouse/Jackson State Park in Alabama. In September filming took place in the greater Saint Louis area capturing scenes from the Civil War, as well as additional Colonial era scenes. Filming of live action sequences will end in early October at the park. The film is set to debut at the park in early April of next year.

Former park historian Brian McCutchen has been actively involved in the project as historical consultant. To view additional pictures and video clips from the film, take a look on the park web site: <http://www.nps.gov/arpo/>



Action! Filming French Marines along the wall of Fort Toulouse, AL

Confederate soldiers return to defend the Post during Confederate Encampment

On the weekend of September 21 & 22, the Civil War returned to Arkansas Post. Park staff and volunteers interpreted camp life, military maneuvers, and the arms and equipment that would have been common at the January 1863 Battle of Arkansas Post.

Cool and sunny weather led to a large number of visitors who spent the day at the park Saturday attending programs and demonstrations. Mark Kalkbrenner led the infantry soldiers in small arms drills, and park ranger Tom Wing of the Fort Smith National Historic Site brought a reproduction six-pounder cannon in order to demonstrate the awesome power of Civil War era artillery. Fort Smith volunteer Mike Jewel accompanied Tom, and provided valuable service in the Number One position. Both Steve and Ed were drafted in order to put a full crew of six men on the gun.

In addition to the military demonstrations, historian Ronnie Nichols presented programs both Saturday and Sunday on the roles African-Americans played during the Civil War. Miss Ellie made her second appearance at the park this year, discussing women’s roles and opportunities of the era. Sunday morning Rev. Steve Copley led a Civil War era church service.

Next September the focus of the Civil War encampment will be on the United States troops who captured Fort Hindman.



Top: Confederate soldiers and visitors observe a program during the Civil War encampment

Bottom: Supt. Ed Wood fires the 6-pounder cannon.

Historic People of the Post

Thomas Nuttall: Englishman, Botanist, Explorer, & Visitor to Arkansas Post



Thomas Nuttall was one of the most adventurous of the early American naturalists. Gifted as a botanist and ornithologist, skilled as a printer, and a traveler with nerve, he came to the newly formed United States at a perfect time to explore its expanding boundaries.

Nuttall arrived in Philadelphia in 1808. He was 22 years of age. Interested in botany, he came to the attention of Benjamin Smith Barton. His first field work for Barton was in the salt marshes of Delaware and the Chesapeake Bay in 1809. In the spring of 1811, he headed up the Missouri River, collecting whatever he could. The result was a wealth of new plants. In the fall, however, when he got back to St. Louis, Nuttall learned of the possibility of war between England and America. He gave up all hopes of going back to Philadelphia and sailed for Europe from New Orleans. Following the War of 1812, Nuttall returned to America, and in 1818 published his first book, *Genera of North American Plants*, at his own expense.

In October 1818 Thomas Nuttall left Philadelphia on a journey that would take him up the Arkansas River, and to Arkansas Post. Proceeding as far West as present-day central Oklahoma, Nuttall visited the Post on his way up river, and then nearly a year later on his return. In 1821 Nuttall's account of this voyage, *A Journal of Travels into the Arkansa Territory* was published.

From 1836 until 1841 Nuttall worked at the Academy of Natural Sciences in Philadelphia, making short trips and documenting the hundreds of new species he had found. Unfortunately, the sudden death of Nuttall's uncle, and a stipulation in the will that Nuttall spend at least

six months of each year in England, forced him to leave America. Except for a brief stay in late 1847 and early 1848, when Nuttall described the last of his American novelties, he remained in Europe until his death in 1859.

Nuttall's contributions were many. He wrote papers in geology, botany and zoology, there is still an ornithological society named in his honor, and it is hard to travel anywhere in the American West without seeing a plant that was not named or collected by him.

Nuttall's reactions to Arkansas Post

January 22, 1819

After emerging out of the swamp, in which I found it necessary to wade about ankle deep, a prairie came in view, with scattering houses spreading over a narrow and elevated tract for about three miles parallel to the bend of the river.... The town, or rather settlement of the Post of Arkansas, was somewhat dispersed over a prairie, nearly as elevated as that of the Chicasaw Bluffs, and containing in all between 30 and 40 houses. Nature has here done so much, and man so little, that we are yet totally unable to appreciate the value and resources of the soil. Amongst other kinds of grain, rice has been tried on a small scale, and found to answer every expectation.

January 24, 1819

An insignificant village, containing three stores, destitute even of a hatter, a shoe-maker, and a taylor, and containing about 20 houses, after an existence of near a century, scarcely deserved geographical notice, and will never probably flatter the industry of the French emigrants, whose habits, at least those of the Canadians, are generally opposed to improvement and regular industry.

January 16, 1820

This morning we observed the newly appointed governor, general Miller, going up to the town from his boat.... Interest, curiosity, and speculation, had drawn the attention of men of education and wealth toward this country, since it's separation into a territory; we now see an additional number of lawyers, doctors, and mechanics. The retinue and friends of the governor, together with the officers of justice, added also essential importance to the territory, as well as to the growing town....

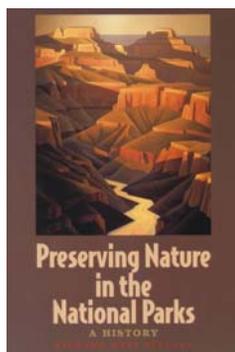
Thus, in the interim of my arrival in this country, it had commenced the most auspicious epoch of its political existence.

Bookstore Browsings



New Items

After being out of print and unavailable for a year, Roger Coleman's survey of the history of Arkansas Post, *The Arkansas Post Story*, is being reprinted. The only book that provides an overview of Arkansas Post from its founding in 1686 through its preservation in the last century, *The Arkansas Post Story* serves as a valuable quick reference tool. Look for this book to reappear on the shelves of the bookstore in the very near future.



Preserving Nature in the National Parks.

Richard West Sellars

This book traces the clash of values between scenery and tourism management and emerging ecological concepts in the national parks. Spanning the period from the creation of Yellowstone National

Park in 1872 to the end of the twentieth century, the book analyses the management of natural resources in national parks across the country.

Ranger Recommendation

When my wife Liz and I first moved to Kansas from Washington State almost ten years ago, the thing that irked me the most was when out of state friends and family would make comments along the lines of, "sure is flat out there," or "seen Dorothy lately?" Since relocating to Arkansas four years ago, I've found that the Natural State suffers from the same types of misconceptions.

Domenica Di Piazza's book *Arkansas*, part of a series on all fifty states, provides an easy to read overview, full of fascinating facts and suitable for all ages. If you find that you need to educate someone you know about what Arkansas is really like, this book is a good place to start.

Eric Leonard, Park Ranger



Di Piazza, Domenica. *Arkansas* [Hello U.S.A. Series]. New York: Lerner Publications Company, 2002. \$6.95

For further information on Eastern National or the Arkansas Post NM Bookstore you can visit www.eParks.com or contact the park at (870) 548-2207

Arkansas Post Wants You!



Volunteering is an American tradition that over the years has made an immeasurable contribution to communities, organizations and individuals throughout the country. Today's volunteers are active, dynamic, creative individuals of all ages who possess the skills, desire, patience and time to accomplish a wide variety of tasks.

Volunteers are accepted from the public without regard to race, creed, religion, age, sex, sexual orientation, national origin, or disability. For more information about volunteering at Arkansas Post National Memorial, contact the Volunteer Coordinator, by phone at 870-548-2207 or by writing to Arkansas Post National Memorial; Attn: VIP Coordinator, 1741 Old Post Road, Gillett, Arkansas 72055

October 26, 2002

Ghosts of the Past

Tours run from 5:00 PM to 8:30 PM. Reservations recommended due to limited space.

February 22 & 23, 2003 Colonial Arkansas Encampment

8:00 am to 5:00 pm , Saturday and Sunday.

April 5, 2003

Premiere of “Echoes of the Past” park film

The Arkansas Post Visitor Center is open daily from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. except Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day and New Years Day. Park information, exhibits, park film and educational sales items are available.

Arkansas Post National Memorial grounds including the picnic area are open from 7:00 a.m. to dusk every day.



**National Park Service
U.S. Department of Interior**

ARKANSAS POST NATIONAL MEMORIAL
1741 Old Post Road
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<http://www.nps.gov/arp/>