Upcoming programs and events at Arkansas Post NMem.

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NOW SHOWING: Arkansas Post: Echoes of the Past

The new visitor center Film Arkansas Post: Echoes of the Past was shown for the first time to the public on Saturday, April 26th. This 23-minute film features live action footage of living historians, recreating scenes from the Post’s history to provide a brief overview of the history of Arkansas Post for park visitors.

Shown on demand, Echoes of the Past has been viewed by over 700 visitors in the month and a half since its debut.

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The Post’s internet presence continues to grow:
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Superintendent’s Scribblin’s

After reading a recent article published in the Chicago Times, which dealt with the fall in visitation to our National Parks, I found it enlightening and thought I would discuss some of the causes presented, my thoughts about them and their repercussions. First, the whole premise of the piece was that our society today is changing from one that appreciates and seeks solace from the wilderness to one that avoids the “inconveniences” of dealing with a wild setting.

Society today seems more preoccupied with passive recreation (electronic games, TV, computers and spectator sports). To me, this means a great loss in appreciation of the treasures of our country. I was privileged to have grown up in the west and exposed to the wonders of hiking and camping in the mountains and deserts. I’m sure that those experiences influenced my thinking, but it saddens me when I realize that a large portion of the population does not share my love of the outdoors. When you consider, in a democracy such as ours, it is the opinion of the majority that determines the fate of the nation (politically, socially and aesthetically), we stand to lose our natural resources to the forces of indifference and economic gain.

To put it in a more practical light, the National Park Service is currently engaged in a conversion of our maintenance operations to a commercial software program called Maximo. The process is very logical and makes decisions based on the cost-effectiveness of a particular choice. But at the very core of this process is a value called “Cost Replacement Value (CRV)” – the worth in dollars and cents of the resources under consideration. This process works just fine when we are dealing with the cost of a modern building or a road or even a waterfront, but try to apply a value to a forest, a field of wildflowers or even historic sites and the whole process becomes an exercise in personal preferences. Oh, there is a “factor” applied for historic value, but who knows what that should really be? Is the CRV really a matter of the number of board feet in a forest, or the cost to reseed a field? What is the CRV of the last of a species? I fear that in our attempts to digitize and justify our efforts and increase our efficiency, we are ignoring aspects of our world that make life worth living.

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La Salle's lieutenant and the first man to describe Arkansas Post.

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When we told him, for our part, that we were some of La Salle's people, he landed as fast as he could. I have difficulty expressing the joy one and the other of us felt, he to learn the news, and us above all to find ourselves having arrived safely in the midst of our people.

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Nebraska
Homestead National Monument of America
Representing one of the more significant outcomes of the Louisiana Purchase, the Homestead Act of 1862 was one of the most significant and enduring events in the westward expansion of the United States. By granting 160 acres of free land to claimants, it allowed Western immigrants a chance to live the American dream.

Nebraska / South Dakota
Missouri National Recreational River
America's longest river, the “Big Muddy” is steeped in stories about American Indians, Lewis and Clark, fur traders, and steamboat captains. The river's role in the settlement of the Great Plains is celebrated in two free-flowing reaches along the Nebraska-South Dakota border. Between Gavins Point Dam and Ponca State Park, NE, it still exhibits its dynamic character with a variety of islands, bars, and chutes. Between Fort Randall Dam and Running Water, SD, it represents the natural landscape of pre-settlement days. These segments also provide habitat for several endangered and threatened bird and fish species.

North Dakota
Fort Union Trading Post NHS
The fur trade was one of the first benefits of the Louisiana Purchase; John Jacob Astor's American Fur Company built Fort Union Trading Post in 1828 near the junction of the Missouri and Yellowstone Rivers in what is now North Dakota, at a location recommended by Meriwether Lewis. In its heyday, the post was a busy place and employed up to 100 people. It became the headquarters for trading buffalo hides and other furs with the Assiniboine, Crow, Cree, Ojibway, Blackfeet, and Hidatsa Tribes.

Knife River Indian Villages
The 1,758 acre site preserves historic and archaeological remnants of the culture and agricultural lifestyle of the Northern Plains Indians. More than fifty archaeological sites suggest a possible 8,000 year span of inhabitation, ending with five centuries of Hidatsa earthlodge village occupation. The circle depressions at the three village sites are up to 40 feet in diameter and are a silent testimony to the people that lived here.
**Staff Notes**

- Park Ranger Eric Leonard was gone for three weeks of ‘maternity leave’ in March and early April for the birth of his son. Samuel Leonard was born March 24, weighing in at eight pounds, eight ounces.
- Park Guide Steve Edwards completed his training at the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center (FLETC) March 20, and returned to the Post for a short time before transferring to Ozark National Scenic Riverways in mid-May.

**HOT OFF THE PRESS**

From the pages of The Arkansas Gazette.
Saturday, May 13, 1820

Mr. Crittenden returned to this place on Tuesday last from Kentucky, where he had gone for the purpose of forwarding to Washington City the memorials, &c. of the General Assembly, in February last. We are happy to learn that the President of the United States, and the Attorney General, have approved of the measures adopted by Mr. Crittenden, in advancing this territory to the second grade of government; and have also decided favorably on the legality of the election of the Legislative Council. We are promised further particulars, which will be given next week.

We also learn, from the above source, that Congress had determined on rising the first of this month, but on its being ascertained that a minister extraordinary from the court of Spain, (Gen. Veves,) had arrived at an eastern port, they postponed their adjournment until the 15th.

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**Arkansas Post is participating in the Louisiana Purchase Bicentennial Passport program**

The Arkansas Post National Memorial is an official site where the collectible Louisiana Purchase Bicentennial passport can be obtained. The passport is a way to encourage Arkansans to travel the state and enjoy the many events planned to celebrate the Louisiana Purchase.

Arkansas Post National Memorial is one of 28 “must-see” destinations around the state of Arkansas related to the Louisiana Purchase. Once a traveler has his passport, he can get it stamped at each of the 28 sites, making the passport a souvenir keepsake.

Passport sites are located in each region of the state. In the state’s capital city, passports and stamps are available at the Arkansas State Capitol, Cox Creative Center, Historic Arkansas Museum, the Old State House Museum and the Museum of Discovery. Some of the other sites around the state that the passports and stamps are available include:
- Plantation Agriculture Museum State Park
- Texaco Mounds Archeological State Park Visitor Center
- Clarendon Welcome Center
- Arkansas Post Museum State Park
- White River National Wildlife Refuge
- Delta Cultural Center
- Lake Chicot State Park
- Louisiana Purchase Historic State Park
- Arkansas Museum of Natural Resources
- Hot Springs National Park
- Lake Dardanelle State Park
- Fort Smith National Historic Site
- Shiloh Museum of Ozark History
- Rogers Historical Museum
- Parkin Archeological State Park
- Village Creek State Park
- Old Davidsonville State Park
- Puebloan Courthouse State Park

Travelers should contact the individual site or www.lapurchase.org for specific information regarding the site’s Louisiana Purchase Bicentennial events.

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**Alligator Safety**

With the warm season in full-swing, alligators can again be easily spotted in Post Bayou or the Park lake on a regular basis. Please keep the following items in mind when viewing alligators in and around the park:

- Never get closer than 15 feet (5 meters) to an alligator. If it hisses or opens its mouth in defense, you should back away even farther. All animals are wild and should be treated with respect at all times.
- It is illegal to feed or disturb any animal or plant life within the boundaries of Arkansas Post National Memorial. When people feed alligators, they lose their fear of humans.

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**A soggy time was had by all - The 2003 Colonial Encampment**

Mother Nature conspired against living history in February, as the weekend of the colonial encampment, February 22-23 was accompanied by torrential rains and cold weather.

Nevertheless, a small group of living historians from four states braved the weather to bring alive the Post’s colonial past. Galen Ewing, who served as a park ranger at the Post in the early 1990s, came down from his current posting, Fort Scott NHS, to supervise the scheduled flintlock musket demonstrations that were cancelled due to the rain.

The visitors who braved the rain for the event learned first hand what it was like to be a wet and cold resident of Arkansas Post’s Colonial past. Programs were presented discussing colonial era French clothing and acts of piracy on the Arkansas River during the Revolutionary War.

Planning is already underway for the next Colonial Encampment in March, 2004, when we will commemorate the 200th anniversary of the transfer of Arkansas Post from the Spanish to the United States of America. Look for more information on this event later this year.

---

**YCC Crew already hard at work**

During the first week of June, the Post saw the arrival of fresh faces to assist in a number of projects over the summer. The park relies on hiring summer youth to complete projects that the permanent staff would not have time to accomplish. This years Youth Conservation Corp (YCC) crew consists of work leader Joseph Byers and crew members Blake Holman, Chuck Hubisch, Justin Sullivan, Heather Wilkerson and Susan Davis. The crew will work through late July on a number of projects around the park, including resurfacing the nature trail and groundwork at Otsouty.
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French Marine Bob Gill braves the rain with the newest in French Fashion. (Photo by Frank Scott, DeWitt Era-Enterprise)
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