



# Arkansas Battlefield Update

Spring 2015 Volume 22, Number 1

Published three times each year by the Arkansas Historic Preservation Program  
An agency of the Department of Arkansas Heritage

## Re-enactments, lectures, tours abound in SWACWHT

By Peggy Lloyd  
SWACWHT Chair

November 4, 2013, was Civil War Weekend at Historic Washington State Park in Washington, Arkansas. Re-enactors enjoyed nice fall weather for camping, drilling, skirmishing and visiting with friends. Civil War Weekend is an annual event on the first weekend in November every year at the park in the old Confederate state capital.

A national re-enactment is scheduled for April 12, 2014, at Prairie D'Ane

## CACWHT offers many commemorations

By Rick Meadows  
CACWHT Chair

There are several opportunities for the public to experience the Civil War in Central Arkansas during the next few months. On January 11, the MacArthur Museum of Arkansas Military History in Little Rock commemorated the execution of David O. Dodd with a program and panel discussion titled: *David O. Dodd: The Man, the Myth and the Window*. Speakers included Anthony Rushing, Dr. Carl Moneyhon, and Stephan McAteer. Earlier in the day, Sons of Confederate Veterans, the United



*Civil War Re-enactors firing at Washington's Civil War Weekend. Photo courtesy of Paul Oller of Hope.*

near Prescott to commemorate the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the clash between the Confed-

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Daughters of the Confederacy, and other re-enactors, hosted a memorial service for David O. Dodd at Mount Holly Cemetery.

Another opportunity will be a program by adjunct history professor, Drew Hodges. The Civil War Roundtable of Arkansas will host Hodges on Tuesday, January 28, at the Second Presbyterian Church in Little Rock. Each summer, Hodges attends a Civil War seminar in Lexington, Virginia. His lecture will begin at 7 p.m. Guests are invited to attend.

The MacArthur Museum of Arkansas Military History will also sponsor a bus tour with historian Ed Bearss on Saturday, March 22. The day-long event will commemorate the Camden Expedition, which began at the

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## ACWSC to back Camden anniversaries

The Arkansas Civil War Sesquicentennial Commission voted at its last meeting to support several April events that will commemorate the 150th anniversary of the Camden Expedition.

The ACWSC will create a mini-website to help promote four weekend events: the Arkansas Historical Association's annual conference at Historic Washington State Park April 2-5, Red River Campaign-Camden Expedition Re-enactment April 7-13, Ouachita County Historical Society Poison Spring Re-enactment April 14-19, and Battle of Jenkins' Ferry Commemoration April 26-27. The commission will also sponsor advertisements for these and other April 2014 events.

The ACWSC added 12 new podcasts about the state's Civil War history to its website. The new podcasts were created in cooperation with the School of Mass Communication at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock. The new offerings include:

**Dr. Carl Carlson-Drexler** of the Arkansas Archeological Survey on the archeological story of Dooley's Ferry

**Dr. Blake Wintory** of Arkansas State University's Heritage Sites

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## For Information

### General Information

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The Arkansas Civil War Heritage Trail is a network of regional private, nonprofit, volunteer organizations seeking to identify, protect, interpret and promote Arkansas properties related to the state's Civil War experience. General guidance for the groups is provided by the Arkansas Historic Preservation Program, a Department of Arkansas Heritage agency.

### Northwest Arkansas CWHT

Alan Thompson (479) 846-2990

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The Northwest Arkansas Civil War Heritage Trail serves Benton, Carroll, Boone, Marion, Washington, Madison, Newton, Searcy and Van Buren counties.

### West Central Arkansas CWHT

Larry Puckett (479) 769-4738

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The West Central Arkansas Civil War Heritage Trail serves Crawford, Sebastian, Franklin, Johnson, Logan, Yell, Pope and Scott counties.

### Southwest Arkansas CWHT

Peggy Lloyd (870) 983-2633

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Tom Beam (501) 760-1116

The Southwest Arkansas Civil War Heritage Trail serves Polk, Montgomery, Garland, Howard, Pike, Clark, Hot Spring, Dallas, Sevier, Little River, Grant, Hempstead, Nevada, Ouachita, Calhoun, Miller, Lafayette, Columbia and Union counties.

### Southeast Arkansas CWHT

Doyle Taylor (870) 395-1356

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The Southeast Arkansas Civil War Heritage Trail serves Jefferson, Grant, Arkansas, Phillips, Cleveland, Lincoln, Desha, Bradley, Drew, Ashley and Chicot counties.

### Central Arkansas CWHT

Rick Meadows (501) 843-3279

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The Central Arkansas Civil War Heritage Trail serves Conway, Perry, Saline, Faulkner, Pulaski, White and Lonoke counties.

### Northeast Arkansas CWHT

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The Northeast Arkansas Civil War Trail serves Baxter, Fulton, Izard, Stone, Cleburne, Independence, Sharp, Randolph, Clay, Lawrence, Greene, Jackson, Craighead, Poinsett, Mississippi, Woodruff, Cross, Crittenden, Prairie, Monroe, Lee and St. Francis counties.

# ACWSC unveils podcasts, awards six CW 150 grants

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program on Lakeport Plantation in the Civil War

**James Johnston**, expert on the Civil War in the Ozarks, on Confederate nitre mining, guerrilla warfare and immigration in the region

**Josh Williams** of Historic Washington State Park on Washington, Arkansas, in 1863

**Rebecca Howard** of the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville with two stories of women in Civil War Arkansas

**Ben Boulden**, a biographer of Frederick Steele, on that general's Civil War experience

**David Sesser** of Henderson State University on disease in Helena during the Civil War

**Mark K. Christ** of the Arkansas Civil War Sesquicentennial Commission on the battle of Jenkins' Ferry.

The podcasts can be accessed at <http://www.arkansascivilwar150.com/research-education/podcasts/>

The ACWSC awarded \$9,150 in grants for projects to commemorate the 150th anniversary of the American Civil War.

Recipients of Arkansas Civil War Sesquicentennial Grants were:

- \* MacArthur Museum of Arkansas Military History, Little Rock, \$2,000 for "On the Road with Ed Bearss," a tour of Camden Expedition sites with the former chief historian of the National Park Service
- \* Grant County Museum, \$575 for "Connecting the Dots to the Battle of Jenkins' Ferry: Students Trace Back an A'MAZEing 150 Years"
- \* Friends of Jenkins' Ferry Battlefield, \$2,000 for the April 26-27 sesquicentennial commemoration of the battle
- \* Bryant Historical Society, \$575 for restoration of the Battle of Hurricane Creek historical marker
- \* Vernon Dutton, \$2,000 to videotape the Camden Expedition: Red River Campaign re-enactment
- \* Conway Women's Chorus, \$2,000 for its "Civil War in Story and Song" program.

Civil War Sesquicentennial Grants of up to \$2,000 are awarded four times per year, as funding is available. The next deadline is Friday, February 14.

Grant applications and guidelines can be downloaded at [www.arkansascivilwar150.com/historical-markers/grants.aspx](http://www.arkansascivilwar150.com/historical-markers/grants.aspx), or can be requested by writing to ACWS Grants, 1500 Tower Building, 323 Center Street, Little Rock, AR 72201, sending an e-mail to [acwsc@arkansasheritage.org](mailto:acwsc@arkansasheritage.org), or calling (501) 324-9877.

The commission continues to sanction events around the state that are being held in commemoration of the Civil War. To date, the ACWSC has commissioned 467 events that have been attended by at least 196,138 people. You can find a list of upcoming events at [www.arkansascivilwar150.com/events/](http://www.arkansascivilwar150.com/events/).

Two more Arkansas Civil War Sesquicentennial Historical Markers have been approved and sent for fabrication. They are:

No. 67: Fort Steele, Little Rock, Pulaski County

No. 68: Skirmish near Mountain Home, Mountain Home, Baxter County.

Arkansas Civil War Sesquicentennial Historical Markers are now located in 47 Arkansas counties, and the commission hopes to see markers in all 75 Arkansas counties before the commemoration ends in 2015. Marker applications can be downloaded at <http://www.arkansascivilwar150.com/historical-markers/markers.aspx>.

## Civil War Arkansas on the Web!

[www.arkansascivilwar150.com](http://www.arkansascivilwar150.com)

[www.arkansaspreservation.org](http://www.arkansaspreservation.org)

[www.civilwarbuff.org](http://www.civilwarbuff.org)

<http://history-sites.com/cgi-bin/boards/arcwmb/>

# Reed's Bridge battlefield backers seeking funds to purchase Jacksonville land

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arsenal. The Red River Expedition was a part of a larger effort to gain control of South Arkansas and Northern Louisiana. Textile mills in the north were idle. Another goal was to secure cotton in Louisiana and Texas for shipment to the north. On March 23, 1864, the Arkansas phase of the campaign began. General Steele and 8,500 men left the Little Rock Arsenal. Strategy called for Steele to join another Federal army under the command of General Nathan Banks. Their goal was to meet in Shreveport.

Ed Bearss, chief historian emeritus of the National Park Service will lead the tour. Bearss is a veteran of World War II, serving in the U.S. Marine Corps. Born in 1923, Bearss travels over 200 days a year giving guided tours of historic battlefields in the United States, the Pacific, and Europe. I have been with Ed at Gettysburg, Antietam, Chancellorsville, and Jackson's Valley Campaign of 1862. He still out walks the many tenderfoots on a tour!

Park Day will be held April 5 in Jacksonville. Since 1996 the Civil War Trust has sponsored Park Day. This is a hands-on day in which volunteers are encouraged to clean up and provide maintenance to our battlefields and historic sites. Workers are asked to meet at Reeds Bridge in Jacksonville for our annual "spring cleaning." The Reed's Bridge Battlefield Preservation Society will develop several work projects around the Homestead Site, which is located along the Bayou Meto on Highway 161 in Jacksonville. Included will be picking up trash, repairing fence rails, and improving the hiking trail. Volunteers will receive t-shirts from the Civil War Trust.

The Reed's Bridge Battlefield Preservation Society is currently working to acquire five acres of land along Highway 161 that was the site of Confederate artillery positions during the August 27, 1863, battle of Bayou Meto. Con-



*Reed's Bridge Battlefield Park, Jacksonville*

federate troops temporarily halted the Union drive to capture the state capital at Little Rock. The battlefield is listed in the National Register of Historic Places, and through an ongoing partnership with the Arkansas Humanities Council has placed interpretive panels throughout the battlefield. During Park Day, volunteers will clean the panels as well.

The organization is seeking legislative funding for part of the purchase, but additional money will be needed to finalize the purchase of the five-acre site. Donations can be sent to Reed's

Bridge Battlefield Preservation Society, c/o Jacksonville Museum of Military History, 100 Veterans Dr., Jacksonville, AR 72076.

Held on the northeast corner of the Arkansas Capitol grounds, the annual Confederate flag day will be held on April 19 and the event will remember the men who fought and died from Arkansas. It will begin at 11 a.m. For additional information, contact Danny Honnoll with the Sons of Confederate Veterans at 870-926-2985.

## *Battlefield Preservation News?*

If your group is working to preserve a Civil War-era battlefield or site, is planning a major re-enactment, or has other news of interest to the battlefield preservation community, send the information to *Arkansas Battlefield Update*. The newsletter is published quarterly. Send submissions to: *Arkansas Battlefield Update*, Arkansas Historic Preservation Program, 1500 Tower Building, 323 Center Street, Little Rock, AR 72201 or to [mark@arkansasheritage.org](mailto:mark@arkansasheritage.org).

# Cane Hill exhibits dedicated; marker for Dunagin's Farm fight renovated

By Alan Thompson  
NWACWHT Chair

The Battle of Cane Hill Driving Tour project is finally at the halfway point. The three latest panels were dedicated in a ceremony on November 9, bringing to four the number of completed waysides with four more to go.

A dreary and overcast sky cleared in time for the fifty people in attendance of the ceremony before moving back in and opening up afterwards. The ceremony opened with a volley by re-enactors with the 11<sup>th</sup> Missouri Infantry, after which I gave a brief overview of the battle and gave the background of the project.

Bobby Braly, executive director of Historic Cane Hill, followed and talked about the goals of his organization and how the driving tour would tie into that. One of the more exciting accomplishments to date for Historic Cane Hill is the acquisition of the Methodist Manse which, according to the source you read, served as Union headquarters in Cane Hill or a Confederate hospital following the Battle of Prairie Grove. As the only antebellum building left within the limits of Canehill (Cane Hill is the historic name, Canehill is the modern name) we can't wait to see it stabilized and restored and we look forward to a long partnership with Historic Cane Hill.

State Senator Jon Woods closed, talking about how he became a Civil War buff and his excitement for all the positive things happening in Canehill and applauded the locals for supporting the preservation of the history in their community. The ceremony concluded with an artillery demonstration by the 1<sup>st</sup> Arkansas Light Artillery.

The following weekend, November 16, the newly restored marker for Dunagin's Farm was dedicated. Dunagin's Farm was the site of the first combat in Arkansas during the war. Due to the site being private property on a dirt road that had turned to mud from recent rain, the ceremony was held at Pea Ridge Na-



*Dunagin's Farm marker taken for conservation (above); restored (below).*

tional Military Park. The marker had been neglected since first placed in 1962 and was in bad shape. A grant from the Arkansas Civil War Sesquicentennial Commission with a match from Heritage Trail Partners, Inc., allowed for the sign to be taken down and sent to Sewah Studios in Ohio where it was refurbished. Sewah did a great job and the marker looks fantastic. Kudos to Christene Ashlock of Save Dunagin's Farm, Glenn Jones of Heritage Trail Partners, Inc., and the staff of Pea Ridge National Military Park for getting this done. To keep up with preservation efforts at Dunagin's Farm, visit the Save Dunagin's Farm Civil War Battlefield Facebook page.

The Prairie Grove Middle School EAST Lab has completed work on their augmented reality project, which they are donating to Prairie Grove Battlefield State Park. Visitors will be able to select a "paddle," which they will hold under a webcam. This will generate a 3-D image of things such as soldiers or cannons that can be rotated and moved by moving the paddle. The kids were going to unveil the exhibit during an Arkansas Civil War Sesquicentennial Commission sanctioned



event on December 6 but due to eight inches of snow that closed the Prairie Grove Schools for six days the ceremony was canceled and will be rescheduled following the holidays. The new date will be posted and we encourage everyone to come out and support the students for their hard work.

Visit  
[ArkansasCivilWar150.com](http://ArkansasCivilWar150.com)  
to learn about  
the sesquicentennial!

# Southwest Arkansas Regional Archives hold trove of Civil War-era manuscripts

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erate forces guarding the road to Washington and Union forces advancing into southwest Arkansas. The Battle of Prairie D' Ane was the turning point of the Camden Expedition, the Arkansas prong of the Red River Campaign. Ticket information can be obtained from the Depot Museum in Prescott, Arkansas, at 870-887-5821.

The Arkansas Historical Association will also meet in Washington for its annual meeting on April 3-5. The theme of the meeting will be "The Home Front" with an emphasis on the Camden Expedition of 1864. Plans are afoot for driving tours to sites in the region. Other points of interest in the vicinity are the Clinton Birthplace Home in Hope and the World War II Southwest Proving Ground between Washington and Hope. For details, contact the Arkansas Historical Association at 479-575-5884 or go to [www.arkansashistoricalassociation.org](http://www.arkansashistoricalassociation.org). Motel accommodations are available in nearby Hope.

The Southwest Arkansas Regional Archives, a branch of the Arkansas History Commission located at Washington, also has resources available for research by the Civil War scholar. Aside from service records on microfilm, SARA has many letters and diaries that touch on Civil War in Arkansas and other states. Charles Humphry of Revilee in Logan County, Arkansas, served in Cabell's Brigade in southwest Arkansas and moved around this part of the state at the time of the Camden Expedition. His diary was originally published in *Wagon Wheels*, a Logan County publication. Copies are available at SARA. The John Pete Davis file records the story of another soldier in Cabell's unit and his insubordination to his commander. Phillip Smith wrote letters to his wife from various camps in northern and eastern Arkansas in 1862 and 1863. These letters were in the hands of a private collector who gave copies to SARA in September 1980. These examples are only a few of

the resources available at SARA for Civil War research.

Washington itself awaits more research both in the archives and archeologically. The J. T. Kidd Memoir was donated to SARA in 1982. Kidd wrote of his experience in the 20<sup>th</sup> Arkansas in Mississippi and at Vicksburg. Captured by Union forces, he managed to escape and make his way back to his home near Spring Hill, a few miles south of Hope. He reports staying in a parole camp at Washington while awaiting formal exchange and then serving under Dockery in Louisiana and in south Arkansas at the time of the Camden Expedition. Though written

years after the events, Kidd's account is alive with vivid detail. It was recently edited and published in a series of articles in the *Hope Star*. Another Confederate soldier from Missouri was transferred to Washington, married a local widow and remained in the town for the rest of his life. He reported working in the "Confederate machine shops" at Washington during the war.

Where were these sites and what archeological evidence still exists? Much remains to be known about activities in and around Washington during the Civil War. The same can be said for many other sites in the region.

## Waldron marker dedication falls victim to bad weather

By Larry Puckett  
*WCACWHT Chair*

This season started off with a down-pour. The late storms of autumn forced us to cancel the unveiling of the Waldron Civil War sesquicentennial historical marker, as they had already suffered so much with the floods earlier this year. Now to be hit with all the ice and snow just before the 13th of December. We will reschedule this and get it on the calendar.

The Second Kansas Cavalry recruited 105 men between Dec. 1st and the 29th at Waldron in 1863, most of who served until the end of the war with this unit. Of those, 105 men over 30 had previously served with various Arkansas CSA units.

The January 26 "Clayton Conversations" will feature a slide presentation by Dr. Kevin L. Jones of photos from his new book, "Fort Smith: Images of America," as well as from his first book, "Fort Smith: Postcard History Series." His new "Images" includes vintage

photographs from the 1800s to the 1970s. Jones holds a PhD from the University of Arkansas-Fayetteville and is an assistant professor of English education at the University of Arkansas-Fort Smith.

The monthly program at the circa 1882 Clayton House in Fort Smith provides perspectives on community life in the late 1800s and early 1900s with programs delivered by area citizens. Pennsylvania native William H. H. Clayton arrived in 1874 from Pine Bluff by appointment of President Ulysses S. Grant to serve as the new U.S. Attorney for the Western District of Arkansas. His family of nine lived in this home for 15 years beginning in 1882 while he worked tirelessly with Judge Isaac C. Parker to bring law and order to Indian Territory and western Arkansas. Clayton prosecuted more than 10,000 cases in the famed frontier federal court. Begin your new year of education with a museum tour. Tours and refreshments begin at 1 p.m.; the program begins at 2 p.m. Seating is limited; call 783-3000 to make reservations.

# NEACWHT helps out with LR event, commemorates Confederate soldier's grave

By *Danny Honnoll*  
*NEACWHT Chair*

With the beginning of the New Year I am reminded of the letters and articles that told of the hard times of the Civil War. Both sides had their hardships from lack of food, heat, clothing, ammo, etc. We all know many lost their lives due to disease. The Arkansas weather from the heat of summer to the bitter cold of winter played its part. Helena had its heat and Prairie Grove had its cold.

Events that our group took part in started with the remembrance of the happenings at the Ten Mile House south of Little Rock. This event took place on September 14 with a rather large gathering on a warm afternoon doing the honors to those who fell during the action at the "Last Stand of the Confederacy" near the Ten Mile House. Kay Tatum and the ladies of the Churchill Chapter UDC, along with the UDC Division, hosted the event with the Shaver, Neil, and McRae Camps of the Sons of Confederate Veterans as the group rededicated the monument to the Last Stand of the Confederacy.

The Confederate Last Stand occurred on September 11, 1863 – just one day after the city of Little Rock was surrendered to Federal forces. The skirmish, along McHenry's Creek, failed. But, nonetheless, our gallant Confederate soldiers, stood against overwhelming odds in their defense of Little Rock. Just a few months later, Federal forces used the smokehouse on the property to imprison 17-year-old David O. Dodd before his transfer to Little Rock to stand trial.

The Confederate Last Stand Monument was erected by the General T. J. Churchill Chapter, UDC on October 15, 1929. Due to road construction, it was relocated in March 2012 to its present day location on the grounds of the Ten Mile House.

Commander M. Ray Jones III and Past Commander W. Danny Honnoll of

the Arkansas Division SCV participated in the re-dedication of the monument. Mrs. Bobbie Barnett, Matron of Honor, Arkansas Division SCV, presented a bouquet in honor of the soldiers who stood against the Union Army, and the 8th Arkansas Infantry, Barrett's Battery, under the command of Tom Bird and Roger Harvell presented a three-volley cannon salute. Will Silas of Jonesboro performed taps at the gathering.

Our gracious hosts, Mr. Hooker and Mr. Elliott, invited guests inside the historic home. This event was sanctioned by the ACWSC, like most of the events of the past few years.

On September 25, Honnoll and Jones presented a presentation on the Civil War to the students at Ridgefield Christian in Jonesboro. More than 50 students took part in learning more about the war that divided our state and nation.

Joe May presented a program on chaplains in gray to our group on October 15. Jones and Honnoll attended the quarterly ACWSC meeting in Little Rock on October 30.

On Veterans Day members of the NEACWHTC took part in the Craighead County Veterans Monument Foundation's annual Veterans Parade. Honnoll was master of ceremonies for the parade and the Veterans Day observance ceremony. Jones, Jackie Stevens, Jimmy Stevens, Doyle Yearata, and Joe May marched in the Veterans Parade.

After the parade Honnoll, Jones, Stevens, May and Dale Barnett drove over 90 miles to do the honors for Pvt. Jerome Washington Ferguson. In remembering veterans of all eras, the Cleburne Memorial Chapter 1758, United Daughters of the Confederacy of Jonesboro, dedicated a military grave

marker in honor of Pvt. Jerome Washington Ferguson, Company B, 1<sup>st</sup> Arkansas Volunteers.

The Col. Robert G. Shaver Camp #1655 of Jonesboro/ Pvt. Job Neill of Batesville/Gen Dandridge McRae of Searcy, Arkansas Division, Sons of Confederate Veterans, Northeast Arkansas Southern Heritage Foundation and the Gen. James F. Fagan Chapter #280, Military Order of Stars and Bars, assisted the UDC with the military marker dedication.

The ceremony took place at the Old Mt. Zion Cemetery at Banner, Ark., near Concord, Ark. Joe C. May, Chaplain, Shaver Camp 1655, Jonesboro, of Bay did the opening and closing prayers for the service. Cleburne Chapter member Wanda Dean of Heber Springs is the great-great-granddaughter of Pvt. Ferguson and was very instrumental in organizing the marker dedication.

On December 17, the NEACWHTC held its annual Christmas Party at the Fishboat Restaurant in Jonesboro. There were 20 in attendance and Honnoll played the part of auctioneer for the group and over \$800 was raised to help with the yearly expenses associated with the maintenance and upkeep of the Southern Confederate Heritage Park in Jonesboro.

You can email Honnoll at [danny@honnoll.com](mailto:danny@honnoll.com), call him at 870-926-2985 or mail him at 216 Hillpoint Cove, Jonesboro, Arkansas 72401-5992 if you have any information on any Civil War sesquicentennial happening that you would like the NEACWHTC to help with.

The next meeting of the NEACWHTC will be on April 15 at 6 p.m. at the Fishboat Restaurant in Jonesboro.

## Civil War Arkansas on the Internet!

[www.arkansascivilwar150.com](http://www.arkansascivilwar150.com)

[www.arkansaspreservation.org](http://www.arkansaspreservation.org)

[www.civilwarbuff.org](http://www.civilwarbuff.org)

<http://history-sites.com/cgi-bin/boards/arcwmb/>

# SEACWHT busy in Helena, Jenkins' Ferry

By Ron Kelley  
SEACWHT Member

The Southeast Arkansas Civil War Heritage Trail sites are gearing up for an eventful year in 2014. As the 150th anniversary of the Red River Campaign nears, events throughout the south part of the state include the sesquicentennial battle commemoration of the Battle of Jenkins' Ferry in Sheridan.

The Friends of Jenkins' Ferry Battlefield have been planning the event for over a year and the last weekend of April will see a three-day event starting April 25. On Friday the 25th, school children from across the state are encouraged to attend educational activities including living histories, artillery, and infantry demonstrations. Saturday the 26th will include living histories, Civil War sutlers and other vendors. A memorial service will take place at the Taylor Cemetery in Leola at 10:30 followed by a tour and interpretation of the Jenkins' Ferry Battlefield State Park. Lunch will be served at noon at the Sheridan Recreation Center. Tours will be given at the Grant County Museum throughout the day.

Following lunch, former National Park Service Chief Historian Ed Bearss will speak on the April 30, 1864, battle of Jenkins' Ferry. Bearss' lecture will be followed by a re-enactment of the battle. At 5:30 there will be Civil War-era performances by musicians, including an era dance.

Sunday morning at 8 a.m., there will be a non-denominational memorial service for the fallen soldiers. Confederate and Union camps will open at 10 a.m. to the public. Bearss will speak again at 1 p.m. and the final battle re-enactment will follow. The event site will be at the Sheridan Recreation Center on Highway 46 (Rose Street). For more information, go to [www.jenkinsferry.com](http://www.jenkinsferry.com).

Another Civil War event will take place at DeValls Bluff. The annual Fort Lincoln Freedom Fest is slated to take place the second weekend in May and will include Civil War living histories, re-enactments, vendors, and musical entertainment. The event will take place at the

DeValls Bluff community center. May 9 will be school days and school children are encouraged to attend the day's educational programs including medical, military, and other facets of the Civil War in Arkansas. A Civil War exhibit will also be available for viewing. May 10 will also host educational programming for the general public, including the firing of cannons and muskets, living histories, and a general historical atmosphere including tours of the original Fort Lincoln near the event site. The event is free of charge to the public and all are welcome.

In Helena, city planners and the Delta Cultural Center are gearing up for an eventful year as well. With the completion of Battery C Park, the newest Civil War site will attract visitors wanting a commanding view of the historical community. The site was the proverbial ground-zero during the July 4, 1863, Battle of Helena and was the only breach in the Union line during the battle. The site hosts a reconstructed hill-top

fort (battery) with a full-scale 6-pound artillery piece, interpretative signage, and other interpretative elements to guide Civil War tourists through the Battle of Helena.

Also in 2014, the Delta Cultural Center will host its quarterly Civil War Roundtable of the Delta. On February 10, Dr. Carl Drexler will speak on the Battle of Big Creek and the exploration of Civil War sites around Helena. Drexler is a historical archeologist at Southern Arkansas University in Magnolia and staff assistant on the Arkansas Archeological Survey. The May 12 roundtable will feature Dyan Bohnert's program on "Civil War Foodways." The Civil War Roundtable of the Delta will be hosted in the newly-renovated Beth El Heritage Hall at the corner of Perry and Pecan Streets from 6pm-7pm.

For more information on Civil War Helena and educational programming, contact the Delta Cultural Center at 870-338-4350.

## Arkansas battlefield preservation

*This Preservation News column by Mark K. Christ of the Arkansas Civil War Sesquicentennial Commission appeared in the December 13 issue of Civil War News.*

Civil War battlefield preservation is alive and well in Arkansas, and the 150th anniversary commemoration of the conflict is giving new impetus for preservation efforts around the state.

The Arkansas Civil War Sesquicentennial Commission is one of the only – if not THE only – Civil War 150 state organization that has made preservation of battlefields a stated goal during the commemoration.

Working closely with the Arkansas Historic Preservation Program, which has been involved in battlefield preservation efforts for more than 20 years, the commission has worked with a number of projects to further their goals of saving hallowed ground from development.

Among the major efforts now underway:

- Reed's Bridge Battlefield Preservation Society (RBBPS) is currently working to acquire five acres that were the site of Confederate artillery positions during the Aug. 27, 1863, battle of Bayou Meto, where Rebel troops temporarily halted the Union drive to capture the state capital at Little Rock.

RBBPS has already saved around 30 acres of the battlefield, which is listed in the National Register of Historic Places, and through an ongoing partnership with the Arkansas Humanities Council has placed interpretive panels throughout the battlefield.

The organization is seeking legislative funding for part of the purchase, but additional money will be needed to close the deal. Donations can be sent to Reed's Bridge Battlefield Preservation Society, c/o Jacksonville Museum of Military History, 100 Veterans Dr., Jacksonville, AR 72076.

- Friends of Jenkins' Ferry Battlefield received a grant from the American Battlefield Protection Program to prepare a preservation plan for the site of the April 30, 1864, battle in which Maj. Gen. Frederick Steele's Federal army fought a desperate rearguard

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# Battlefield preservation opportunities seen

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action as it attempted to cross the swollen Saline River at the end of the disastrous Camden Expedition.

Casualties were high on both sides (two Confederate brigade commanders were mortally wounded in the action) in the battle, which was depicted in the opening scenes of the 2012 film "Lincoln." Some key property holders appear to be interested in selling, and FJFB is raising funds toward that end. To learn more, visit <http://jenkinsferry.com>.

- A battlefield plan has been written for two other Camden Expedition battlefields, Elkins' Ferry and Prairie D' Ane, both located in Nevada County. The Elkins' Ferry site, where a fierce battle was fought April 3-4, 1864, at the crossing of the Little Missouri River, is owned by a timber company and efforts are being made to negotiate a sale of the entire site. The Prairie D' Ane battlefield is also remarkably intact, and both sites are National Historic Landmarks.

- Helena, site of a desperate July 4, 1863, battle to relieve pressure on Vicksburg on the same day that Mississippi River bastion surrendered, is undergoing a Civil War renaissance.

The Civil War Helena project has initiated extensive interpretation, with wayside exhibits explaining all aspects of how the war affected the city; Freedom Park, which explores the African American experience; and a recreation of Fort Curtis, the main Union fortification during the war, which was built from the original 1863 plans. The Civil War Trust worked with partners in Helena to acquire 56 acres of rugged terrain over which Confederate Gen. James Fagan's Arkansas division struggled in their attack on Battery D on the south end of town. Additional preservation opportunities abound.

- The Northwest Arkansas Civil War Heritage Trail has been working with a number of partners – including the Arkansas Civil War Sesquicentennial Commission, Heritage Trail Partners and the Arkansas Humanities Council – to interpret the Nov. 27, 1862, battlefield, which was the site of a nine-hour battle fought over 12 miles of the rugged Boston Mountains.

While battlefield preservation has not yet been pursued at Cane Hill, a resurgent preservation group in the Washington County town makes it a possibility.

- The Devil's Backbone battlefield was the scene of a Sept. 1, 1863, rearguard action as

Confederate troops protected their supply wagon after abandoning Fort Smith.

The battle had some interesting aspects – a large percentage of the Confederate troops were actually conscripted Unionists who fled en masse when the battle began – and its landscape is still largely intact. The Civil War Trust acquired 10 acres at Devil's Backbone, and other parcels are available.

- Friends of Dunagin's Farm Battlefield are working to preserve the site of a Feb. 17, 1862, scrap during the Pea Ridge Campaign that was the first battle fought entirely in the state of Arkansas. Working with local partners, the group has refurbished interpretive signage at the site and is exploring ways to preserve the battlefield.

Arkansas was the scene of more than 770 offensive operations during the Civil War, ranging from pitched battles such as Pea Ridge to skirmishes like the one at Lunenburg in 1864, in which all of the combatants on both sides were from hilly Izard County.

As interest in preserving these sites grows and gains proponents, there will still be plenty of opportunities to save hallowed ground when the Civil War bicentennial begins.

The Arkansas Historic Preservation Program is an agency of the Department of Arkansas Heritage. Other DAH agencies are the Arts Council, the Old State House Museum, the Historic Arkansas Museum, the Delta Cultural Center in Helena, the Mosaic Templars Cultural Center and the Natural Heritage Commission.

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