



# Arkansas Battlefield Update

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## Fund-raising at Prairie D'Ane continues

By Peggy Lloyd  
SWACHT Chair

In Prescott, the Nevada County Depot Museum is continuing its fundraising activities for the acquisition of the Prairie D'Ane battlefield site. The museum staff and board members are conducting a letter campaign and are contacting foundations and interested groups in the region to raise the remaining funds for Prairie D'Ane. They need an additional \$90,000 to complete the transaction.

The acquisition will preserve 800 acres of hallowed ground at the Prairie D'Ane battlefield. The property was appraised at \$1.4 million and the owners are offering it for \$900,000 – a generous charitable donation of half a million dollars.

The option on the purchase will expire in November.

Donations in any amount are welcome and should go to the Nevada County Depot Museum, 403 West First Street South, Prescott, AR

71857. Please note that the donation is for Prairie D'Ane. For questions, contact the curator at 870-887-5821 or [curator@depotmuseum.org](mailto:curator@depotmuseum.org). The museum is open from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., Tuesday to Friday. The curator can make appointments for visits



Part of the 808 acres in the Prairie D'Ane purchase area

at other times.

Activities are ongoing in the Southwest region to acquire, develop and promote the battle sites associated with the Arkansas portion of the Red River Campaign, known  
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## NWACWHT Cane Hill marker project progresses

By Alan Thompson  
NWACWHT Chair

The Battle of Cane Hill Driving Tour project recently received a grant from the Northwest Arkansas Economic Development District to fund another wayside panel. Once completed, this will bring the number of waysides in place to five with three to go. Other grants are being applied for to fund the remaining panels.

Staying at Cane Hill, we celebrated the grand opening of Cane Hill College on May 13. The building is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and was constructed in 1886. It sits a short distance from the site of the college during the Battle of Cane Hill. This event marked the completion of a two-year restoration! There were building tours, a horseshoe tournament, live bands, trail walks and museum tours.

Recent acquisitions by Historic Cane Hill include the homes of Fontaine R. Earle and William B. Welch. Earle was president of Cane Hill College until he closed it at the beginning of the war. He fought in the Battle of Wilson's Creek as a private in the Arkansas militia before rising to the rank of major in the 34<sup>th</sup> Arkansas Infantry with whom he fought at Prairie Grove, Helena

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# Old Austin tree makes famous, historic list

By R.D. Kever  
CACWHT Chair

more generations can visit and view this magnificent historical witness tree.

The Austin Pioneer Cemetery (1831-1864) has recently taken a couple of hits. First, a storm from Friday, March 17, toppled a large tree and blew limbs down throughout the cemetery. Secondly in March, vandals damaged four headboards by breaking them down and pulling them from the ground. The storm and vandal damage has been addressed and repaired. A camera security plan is in the works.

The Friends of the Lonoke County Museum is finishing a project to pinpoint the location of the "Grand Review," where General Theophilus Holmes on November 27, 1862, reviewed several thousand Confederate troops. The parade and review was over two miles long and the site has been found to be near Lonoke.

It has recently come to light that a Model 1858 44-caliber Remington pistol was found near Austin. It was found cocked and with some loaded cylinders.

The Civil War Witness Tree at Old Austin has made its way onto the Famous and Historical Trees of Arkansas list. This large white oak tree is estimated to have been a sprouting acorn about the time of the Revolutionary War. The Arkansas Forestry Commission measurements come in at a girth of 16'-5" and a canopy spread of 110 feet.

From the recovery of artifacts it has been determined that both armies camped around and under the tree during the war. The Union Army destroyed the 1835 Baptist Church building that stood near where the tree stands today. In more recent times the tree has weathered at least two tornados that destroyed some of the surrounding areas.

A tree of this age – approximately 250 years – does have health issues, mainly disease, insects (carpenter ants home) and a need for maintenance and nutrients. A plan has been implemented to protect the tree's future health, so that many

## For Information

### General Information

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mark.christ@arkansas.gov

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

Curtis Varnell  
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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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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

Vacant (Volunteer Chair needed!)

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

### Central Arkansas CWHT

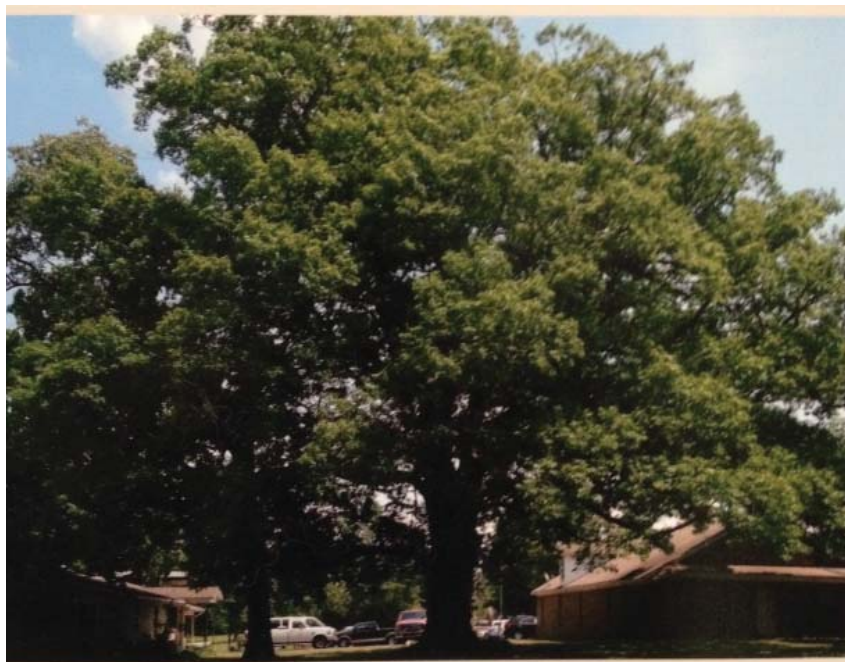
R.D. Kever (501) 681-9962  
convertiblecowboy@suddenlink.net

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

### Northeast Arkansas CWHT

Danny Honnoll (870) 935-9830  
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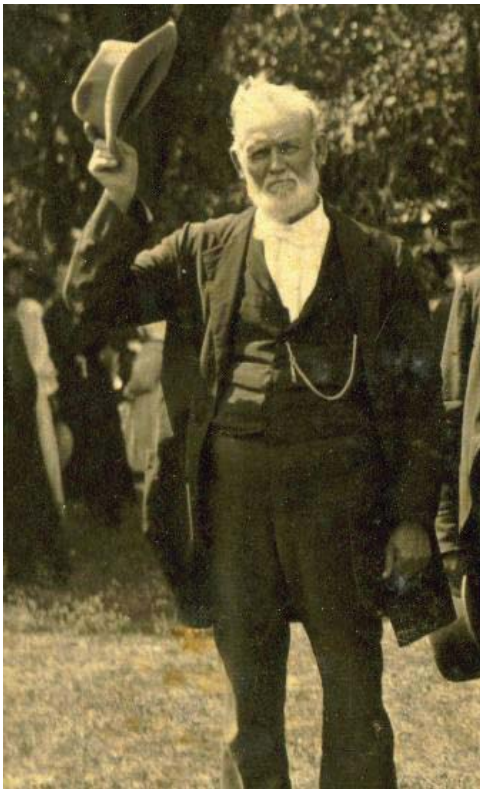
The Northeast Arkansas Civil War Trail serves Baxter, Fulton, IZard, Stone, Cleburne, Independence, Sharp, Randolph, Clay, Lawrence, Greene, Jackson, Craighead, Poinsett, Mississippi, Woodruff, Cross, Crittenden, Prairie, Monroe, Lee and St. Francis counties.



# Restoration projects on go at Cane Hill

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and Jenkins' Ferry. He returned to Cane Hill and was elected to the state legislature where he pushed through the state's first bill for free public education. He reopened Cane Hill College and served as president until 1892. Earle was the surgeon of the 34<sup>th</sup> Arkansas and was left in charge of the Confederate wounded, who



*Fontaine Richard Earle*

were transported to Cane Hill. After the war he returned to Cane Hill and became cofounder of the Arkansas Medical Society and a member of the Board of Trustees for Arkansas Industrial University, now the University of Arkansas.

The Battle of Fayetteville Commemorative took place April 15. It featured a concert by the NWA Heritage Brass Ensemble followed by a lecture on the Battle of Fayetteville. A Civil War surgeon program took place, as did a program on medicinal herbs.



*Cane Hill College building following its restoration*

Tours of the Headquarters House were available and living historians portrayed Civil War infantry, cavalry and artillery.

The University of Arkansas Department of Anthropology in collaboration with the Arkansas Archeological Survey and the Midwest Archeological Center of the National Park Service is happy to offer an archaeological field school, May 30- June 30, 2017. The field school will be for six hours of upper division

anthropology credit and will be held at Pea Ridge National Military Park. Excavations will be focusing on Leetown--a small community that existed during the battle, but soon thereafter disappeared. Learn basic excavation techniques, learn to map and process archeological finds, learn basic laboratory skills, learn how to identify historic-period artifacts... all at an important local historic site. Contact Dr. Jamie Brandon (jbrando@uark.edu) for more information or to enroll.

## Civil War Arkansas Online

[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/>

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

**Learn about the Civil  
War in Arkansas!**

# Byway project recognizes region's sites

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as the Camden Expedition. Efforts in Nevada County are focusing on the three battle sites of Elkins' Ferry, Prairie D'Ane and the Moscow Rearguard Action. However, efforts are widespread in a ten-county region in Central, Southwest and South Arkansas to promote the Civil War sites in the region. The counties involved are Pulaski, Saline, Hot Spring, Ouachita, Dallas, Clark, Hempstead, Nevada, Cleveland and Grant. Representatives from these counties are working to form a Scenic Byway in the region.

The Scenic Byway Steering Committee for the Arkansas Red River Campaign met at the Arkansas Military Museum in Little Rock on March 20 to view the starting point of Union General Frederick Steele's invasion of Southwest Arkansas. Steele called this 1864 spring offensive "The Camden Expedition," though its initial objective was to advance on Shreveport, Louisiana, defeat Confederate Trans-Mississippi Commander Edmund Kirby Smith and invade Texas. Kathy Boyette of Camden arranged the meeting with Museum Director Stephen McAteer, a native of Camden. The group discussed events in their counties, the possibility of an exhibit on the Red River Campaign at the Arkansas Military Museum and future steps for the group to take. The development of a website on Steele's 275-mile trek through Southwest Arkansas is under development by Danny Stewart of Prescott with committee members donating photos and materials.

The By-Way Steering Committee met on February 13 in Benton with Steve Perdue of Benton making the arrangements. The Union Army passed through Benton during the 1864 march into Southwest Arkansas and had used the town as a recruiting



*Marks' Mills is among the sites on the planned Camden Expedition byway.*

point for men who wished to join the Union Army. Steve led the tour of the updated Andrew Hunter House; the Hester-Lenz House, which a local group is attempting to renovate; and the 1852 Shoppach House. After a luncheon meeting and discussion, the committee visited the military monuments and memorials on the grounds of the Saline County Courthouse.

Mudpuppy and Waterdog LLC of Versailles, Kentucky, are continuing their work on an interpretive plan for the Arkadelphia, Okolona, Elkins' Ferry, Prairie D'Ane, Moscow leg of the Camden Expedition. They toured in Clark and Nevada Counties earlier in the year and returned more recently to Prescott to interview persons with connections to or knowledge of the Civil War sites. They will return to Prescott for a public meeting May 23, 2017, at the Nevada County Courthouse to discuss their interpretive plan. The public is invited.

In developments on other Civil War sites in Nevada, Texas Cemetery Restoration LLC has completed a survey of Moscow Cemetery for the repair, re-setting

and cleaning of the remaining stones at Moscow that need work. The bid was \$25,715. The Cemetery Association with help from the Depot Museum and the Arkansas Historic Preservation Program will spread the work over a three-year period. Texas Restoration completed 35 stones in 2016 with funds from an AHPP grant, the Cemetery Association and local donors. Local volunteers will work on cutting back invasive plants and clearing downed trees and limbs in 2017.

The Cemetery Association has applied for another grant from AHPP. AHPP will announce the successful applicants sometime in May with work on the projects starting no earlier than July 1, 2017.

In additional news, the Arkansas Museum Association completed its annual meeting at Historic Washington State Park on March 30. Re-enactors from Prescott and Camden were also on their way to the Shiloh Battlefield in western Tennessee about 90 miles from Memphis for a re-enactment from April 6-9.

# New year proves busy for NEACHWT

By Danny Honnoll  
NEACWHT Chair

With the flowers blooming it must be spring and time to get the mothballs off of those uniforms. It was 155 years ago that men from Arkansas under the command of Patrick Cleburne took part in the Battle of Shiloh.

The Southern Confederate Heritage Park in Jonesboro raised new flags on January 21, 2017. The historical flags of honor were: Star Spangled Banner U.S. Flag, Arkansas State Flag, 3rd National Confederate Flag and the Hardee Battle Flag. It is also time to get the mower blades sharpened to mow the park again this year. If anyone wants to help mow our park please contact me at [danny@honnoll.com](mailto:danny@honnoll.com). NEACWHTC members

Adam Whitney (Shaver Camp SCV Member) and Tara Whitney Bellomy (Dixie Daughter Chapter UDC) put a new coat of paint on our cannon. They did an excellent job and made it shine like a new penny.

On January 7, 2017, David O. Dodd, the young lad hung by the Federals, was remembered at high noon. Numerous organizations were present as Danny Honnoll presented an observance of young Dodd. Honnoll stated that Dodd was a brave young man who got mixed up in the business of war and paid the ultimate price of his life. He was true to his friends and did not reveal the names that helped him gather information on the strength of the Union forces in Little Rock. General Frederick Steele made an example of this young man thinking that Dodd would back down and reveal names, but he did not. The smell of gunpowder and the sounds of war echoed between the tombstones at Mount Holly Cemetery in Little Rock.

The Arkansas Legislature set up a



*Danny Honnoll speaks at David O. Dodd commemoration ceremony.*

new date to honor General Robert E. Lee. The state will no longer honor a Civil War icon on his birthday. Robert E. Lee Day will be the second Saturday in October. We all need to make note and honor the death date of General Robert E. Lee this year. The General Patrick Cleburne Memorial was held on March 18 at the Confederate Cemetery in Helena. Our very own Doyle Taylor presented the story of Cleburne and how he fought for the Confederacy until his death on November 30, 1864. The weather was perfect for the wool. The General Dandridge McRae Camp of Searcy and the Shaver Camp of Jonesboro had artillery and did the honors for Cleburne. Andy Taylor of the Cleburne Camp of Pine Bluff played tattoo to end the ceremony.

The 21st annual Confederate Heritage Day ceremony was held on Saturday, April 15, on the State Capitol grounds. This is another part of the Sons of Confederate Veterans observing and preserving the memory

of the soldiers from Arkansas who wore the Gray. The NEACWHTC took part in the ceremony this year. The event was a celebration of three separate events: Arkansas Confederate History, Heritage Month, Confederate Memorial Day and Confederate Flag Day. This is the twentieth year that all three events have been combined into one.

A Southern Iron Cross Dedication for Southern Cross service was held for Lt. Col. Schnable on May 6. The UDC's Dixie Daughters asked the NEACWHTC to help with this marking of a Civil War veteran, Lt. Col. John Adams Schnable (Schnabel, Sachnabell, etc.) to place a Southern Iron Cross at his gravestone located in the Chinn Cemetery in Independence County (originally buried in the Diaz Patterson-Minor cemetery, but for some reason his stone--not the

**Continued on next page.**

# Fort Smith a key Arkansas Civil War site

By Curtis Varnell  
WCACWHT Chair

At the onset of the Civil War, Fort Smith was one of the most important military sites in the state. The fort, originally constructed to provide control of the Indian Territory, housed federal troops as well as valuable munitions and supplies.

Several Civil War markers are placed on and about the site and commemorate both the Confederate and Union occupation of the fort. On April 23, 1861, the U.S. garrison at the fort was abandoned to local Confederate militia. During the first year of the war, the post served as an important site for recruitment and training for Confederate forces. Confederate troops from Fort Smith and the surrounding area served at Wilson's Creek and, later, at Pea Ridge. The fort fell to Union forces under General James Blunt on September 1, 1863. For the remainder of the war, it served as a haven for Union sympathizers and former slaves.

Troops from Fort Smith patrolled up and down the Arkansas River and provided valuable protection for the steamboats that plied the river. The troops were involved in several skirmishes in the area including Devil's Backbone near Greenwood, Haguewood Prairie near Paris, Waldron, Van Buren and the skirmish at Massard Prairie. Civil War historical markers have been placed at each of these sites.

Fort Smith supplied troops for the Camden Expedition of 1864, but most of their efforts were to protect local farmers from bands of southern bushwhackers and the occasional raids and sniping of small Confederate bands. Remnants of the walls of the old fort, as well as the commissary and barracks, remain on what is now the Fort Smith National Historical Site. Historical markers, including two placed during



*Lukas Chapman investigates a Civil War cannon at Fort Smith NHS.*

the Arkansas sesquicentennial events, are found on the grounds along with cannon and other war memorabilia. The visitor's center houses several Civil War collections as well as collections centered on the federal court and hanging gallows of Judge Isaac Parker. During the year, one can expect park interpreters to provide various Civil War programs ranging from civil war medicine to live cannon fire demonstrations.

The commissary building as well as most

of the fort and parade grounds are open daily to the public at no charge.

The fort serves as a great jumping off place to visit the various Civil War sites found in the Arkansas River valley. Audio segments offering descriptions and insight into life during the Civil War and are available through the Arkansas Civil War Sesquicentennial Commission's website at <http://www.arkansascivilwar150.com/>.

## NEACWHT news

**Continued from previous page.** body--was moved to Chinn). He built the Salado Creek Bridge; the Jacksonport Courthouse; the Rolla, MO, Jail; the Spring Mill Dam (located on Highway 69 between Batesville and Cushman); etc. Schnabel was also active at Harper's Ferry.

Just because the sesquicentennial of the "War Between the States" is over we all

need to make sure we find the oral histories of Arkansas during this time in our state's history to preserve and protect our state's history.

The NEACWHTC has a historical marker marking a Civil War action that took place in western Craighead County. The UDC, SCV, MOSB and North East Arkansas Heritage Foundation have helped sponsor this marker.

# Reed's Bridge site in Jacksonville is far more than just a battlefield

By Mike Kish, Jr.  
RBBPS President

When visiting a battlefield today, might one expect to see at least a marker denoting the briefest battle details? In Arkansas, I do. The Arkansas Civil War Sesquicentennial Commission made it relatively easy and affordable for many small battlefields to attain at least that level of recognition if concerned locals cared enough. A surprising amount of information can be put on the two-foot by two-foot approximately sized markers. Many sites throughout the state first gained roadside recognition for their battles and related historic acts because of the commission's and state's generosity. The legislature created the commission by way of Act 635 of the 86<sup>th</sup> Arkansas General Assembly—thank you, Arkansas.

Reed's Bridge has both metal and fiberglass panels. In the grand scheme, Reed's Bridge is smaller and bigger than some. Its visual offerings are the same. The acreage is far from intact and fractured, reflecting the dedication of some long-term residents doing what they could when able.

The panels satisfy the most basic needs of a visitor by denoting a particular place in time. That visitor is often able to absorb panel information, look upon surroundings, and with varying degrees of imagination visually recreate what occurred in distant past. At least, that's what I often do when only a marker is present. I distinctly remember doing the same at my first Arkansas battlefield visit, Jenkins' Ferry, in 1993 while attending school at Little Rock AFB.



After reading the marker and contemplating the meager details coupled with previous light research, I walked to the river. Dark under the trees. Plenty of mosquitoes. Real “snakey” looking—water moccasins? I tried to visualize myself present at the same site 100 plus years ago—swollen river, endless mud, building a pontoon bridge, crossing it, rear guard action across the creek, etc. Not a desirable place. Total time, a half hour-ish.

Often, Reed's Bridge visitors fit the same mold—read the first sign at the parking lot, touch the heavily worn reproduction cannon, look around, and depart about 15 minutes later. Many historic sites of different interest have the same result; they are only able to hold a visitor but a brief time. If there's more to do, people often will visit proportionately longer. That was the impetus behind Reed's Bridge family farmstead. Jacksonville's Steve Shore hit a homerun with that idea. The town's Tommy Dupree did the same with his multitude of historic markers, 15 or

so, in the greater Jacksonville region.

Our battlefield is fortunate in that it is not only a Civil War site, but a confluence of significant events in Arkansas history. The Butterfield Stage ran here, the sorrowful Trail of Tears, too. Military Highway, a key to state development, anchored all three.

Those aspects aren't enough for me as I try to help city leaders realize what an underappreciated gem Reed's Bridge is. This effort operates against a backdrop of the prospect of Jacksonville becoming landlocked. Once encircled, what will it do to attract more visitors? I suspect revenue from its trap and skeet range, softball fields, and businesses will plateau. Then what? The battlefield will still be there ripe for attention.

With that in mind, I'm slowly trying to enhance interest beyond the battle and simple related history. We try to grow a period-correct garden. Ten inch long okra, anyone? Four historic apple types are planted, to include Arkansas Black. Peach trees

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# Reed's Bridge offers variety of pleasures

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may arrive in the next couple of months. Aware of the Indian Blood Cling?

As a fourth-year Master Gardener at Pinnacle Mountain State Park, I'm slowly doing a bit of what they do—cultivation of native plants. You know, something besides gum trees, poison ivy, green briar, Mimosa trees, and privet tangles—the latter are very successful alien species. Four types of perennial sunflower are on site. At least seven types of trees and bushes are planted, one of which produces edible and desirable fruit—Chickasaw plum. These and others await signage and to see if they'll

survive. Again, the intent of these cultivations is to spur interest outside the battle.

At least 15 commercial photographers use the grounds. Two Boy Scout Troops hold campouts here. Two more Eagle Scout projects should be concluded before this printing. A Native American group conducted a water ceremony on the Bayou Meto Creek. EARA, Early Arkansas Reenactors Association, held a weekend Twelfth Night celebration. Fishermen fished the banks and used three nearby boat ramps society members had a hand in getting constructed. All were encouraged to return and more often. I'm currently

fielding a wedding inquiry. We need these and more visitor types.

They increase the value of a battlefield and help engender support from local governments. I think this would be a wise strategy for any group looking to develop and more importantly, preserve a battlefield from adverse growth or use. The more diverse and overlapping interests, the better for all. Depending on the activity, time of year, and as I envision things within our current range of abilities, we easily can go from a 15 minute visit to a day-long activity. Where appropriate, how can a battlefield being more than a battlefield not be good?

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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