



Arkansas Battlefield Update

Summer 2017 Volume 25, Number 2

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

Prairie D'Ane nears fund-raising goal

By Peggy Lloyd
SWACWHT Chair

As the summer of 2017 draws to a close, there is much activity to report in Southwest Arkansas. The pending acquisition of 808 acres in the Prairie D'Ane National Historic Landmark near Prescott and the development of an Arkansas Civil War Scenic By-Way in ten counties are of great significance for historic preservation of sites associated with the 1864 Arkansas Red River Campaign and for economic development in the region.

The acquisition of the 808-acre Hale Farm near the Highway 19 exit on I-30 at Prescott is progressing. The property appraised for \$1.4 million. Dr. Patrick Hale, the owner of the property, donated \$500,000 of the sales price, leaving \$900,000 to be raised. An application is in progress for \$700,000-

--half the appraised value of the property--to the National Park Service's American Battlefield Protection Program through the Civil War Trust. The Friends of Nevada County Civil War Battlefields have worked to raise the remaining \$200,000. Donations have come from a variety of sources:

the Arkansas Historic Preservation Program, the Sturgis Foundation, the Ross Foundation, the Arkansas Historical Association, State Senators Maloch and Teague, the Nevada County Quorum Court, the banks in Prescott, and many businesses and organizations in Nevada County, as well as many



Re-enactment on the Prairie D'Ane battlefield in 2014.

private individuals, both in and outside the region. A little under \$30,000 remains to be raised at the time of this writing.

The Friends of the Nevada County Battlefields have until November 1, 2017, to complete the

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Civil War roadways can still be followed today

By Curtis Varnell
WCACWHT Chair

Traveling in Arkansas prior to the Civil War was a tenuous and difficult task. To travel anywhere in Arkansas, it is necessary to consider geology/geography/biology of the region. Early settlements occurred along the various rivers and streams that crisscrossed the state and were primarily accessed by steam or keel boats and those were the

primary means of transportation of people and goods. In 1860, only 38 miles of railroad track existed in the state and even Little Rock was not connected to any national railway system. The Delta region still retained many of the features created during the New Madrid earthquake, which made overland travel difficult but these roads were exceptional in comparison to the trails and paths of the Ozarks and Ouachitas. Military travel required

the transport of goods and supplies by wagon and thus necessitated travel over the few existing roads that could be traversed by these vehicles.

Many of these roads, deemed military roads, were built during early settlement days to transport soldiers and supplies to the series of military posts used to police the Indian reservations. An old road ran from Helena, northwest to Clarendon, to Conway, Morrilton,

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Civil War photograph

By R.D. Keever
CACWHT Chair

A faded civil war photograph taken at a Confederate prisoner of war camp at Fort Delaware in 1864 by noted Philadelphia civil war photographer J. L. Gihon has come to light.

The Gihon photograph has had some preservation work completed. The photograph has nine soldiers in a group shot. The nine men were chaplains or ministers during the war. These ministers were often in trouble with the authorities at Fort Delaware for speaking out against the government during their sermons, which led to two of these men being considered also as political prisoners.

Another one of these nine men was a young Arkansas minister from north central Arkansas, he was Captain John H. Dye of the 8th Arkansas Cavalry (Newton's). He was captured near Batesville on October 6, 1863. During his 15 months as a POW, he spent time at five different Federal Prisoner of War camps. Just wondering if his style of preaching had anything to do with him being moved so often.

He was finally paroled at Jacksonport on June 5, 1865. After the war he served as a minister to several Arkansas communities. He also spent time in Virginia and overseas. In 1900 he was a teacher and minister to 96 students under his care at the Arkansas School for the Blind in Little Rock. He died at Searcy in 1930.

It should be noted that a thanks should be given to a Presbyterian Historical Society in Philadelphia that restored this war time photograph, which led to the identity



of this Arkansas minister and soldier.

Some restoration work has begun on the historic T. J. Young general store at Austin Station, Arkansas. Work has started with foundation and floor repair. Theodore Young was a driving force behind the enclosure and the establishment of the 1906 Confederate Camp Nelson Cemetery.

The Austin Pioneer Cemetery pavilion is under construction.

The civil war re-enactment unit, the 1st Michigan Battery G, has a new Facebook page and website. The website is Ar-reenactors.org and the Facebook page is the Arkansas Reenactors Event Schedule. These give folks an eighteen-month calendar of upcoming events and contact information.

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

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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

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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

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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

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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.



Interpretive plan for battle sites complete

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acquisition funding. Dr. Carl Drexler of SAU in Magnolia will commence archeological work on Prairie D'Ane in early 2018.

The Economic Development Office, the Prescott Chamber of Commerce and the Depot Museum held a well-attended coffee at the Prescott/Nevada County Library on August 24 to inform donors of the progress on the Nevada County sites. Mark Christ of the Arkansas Historic Preservation Program spoke on the national battlefield preservation program and the advantages of heritage tourism. Fiona Taylor, archeological assistant to Dr. Carl Drexler of SAU, spoke on the Civil War relics recovered at Elkins' Ferry. Peggy Lloyd, president of the Arkansas Civil War Scenic By-Way Steering Committee, spoke on the group's efforts to establish the By-Way and gave specifics on the By-Way route in southern Clark County, Nevada County and to Historic Washington State Park in Hempstead County.

Civil War consultants Mudpuppy and Waterdog, LLC, of Versailles, KY, have also completed the final report on the development of their interpretive plan for the 1864 Arkansas Red River Campaign (aka Camden Expedition) in Clark and Nevada Counties. The plan includes the interpretation for the Battles of Terre Noire and Okolona (aka Battle of the Bees) in Clark County and for the Battles of Elkins' Ferry, Prairie D'Ane and Moscow in Nevada County. It also outlines plans for a visitor center on I-30 near Prescott. At present, the Nevada County Depot and Museum in Prescott serves as the visitor center for the Civil War sites in Nevada County.

The Depot Museum also has a new curator. Judy Duke of Prescott began work on August 15. A native of Magnolia, Judy has lived in Nevada County for thirty years. She has always been active in community affairs, and, after working as the assistant to



Camden Expedition Scenic By-Way Committee visits Benton.

the director of the Prescott Chamber of Commerce for a year, she became the director of the Prescott Chamber from 2011 to 2014. She worked for the Prescott law firm of McKenzie, Vasser and Barber from 2015 to 2017 and was a long-time member of the Depot Museum board before taking the position of curator.

In other developments on the Nevada County Civil War sites, the news continues. Paul Ridgell, president of the Depot Museum board, submitted a request to the Arkansas Forestry Commission for a plan to restore the old growth forest over a period of years on the Elkins' Ferry site. The Commission has agreed and work will commence in the near future. Arkansas Historic Preservation has also awarded another grant to reset, repair and clean more tombstones at Moscow Church and Cemetery, all that remains of the scattered antebellum village along the Camden to Washington stagecoach road. Texas Cemetery Restoration of Dallas, TX, will perform the work and will be back in Arkansas in late September. The work will be part of a three-year project on some 75 stones. Volunteers will work

on clearing out invasive plants around and in the cemetery. Planning will also begin for renovating and repairing the Moscow church building.

The Arkansas Civil War Scenic By-Way is also moving into a crucial phase of its work. After touring sites and meeting in many locales for over a year, the representatives met with Jeff Ingram of the Arkansas Highway Department at the MacArthur Museum of Arkansas Military History on July 20 to discuss the establishment of the By-Way. The representatives hammered out a route and then returned to their counties to work out a more specific plan for each county involved. A mapping specialist is now working with their suggestions. The group met again on August 28 in Arkadelphia to discuss the work so far and work out spur routes for more sites of Civil War or other historic or cultural interest. The Steering Committee hopes to submit their plan to the Legislature when it convenes in January 2018. The counties involved are Pulaski, Saline, Hot Spring, Clark, Nevada, Hempstead, Ouachita, Cleveland, Dallas and Grant.

Heritage Trails System shows roadways

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Old Dwight Mission and into Fort Smith. The road branched at Dardanelle and crossed the river, eventually passing through Paris and Charleston, then into Fort Smith. Another ran from Fort Smith south to Greenwood, where it branched to the east and travelled through Booneville, Danville, and thus to Hot Springs. Continuing south, it proceeded to Waldron and southward.

Present day highways that correspond to these civil war roads are state highways 65, 22, 71, and 10. All are designated Civil War roadways and have signage placed along the highway during the sesquicentennial designating them as such. Along these routes are placed various Civil War markers and monuments designating them as sites of significant action during the Civil War. These include markers at Clarksville, Paris, Waldron, Van Buren, Greenwood, and other present-day towns.

Many of Arkansas's major rivers bisect the state from west to east. This includes the Arkansas, the Caddo, Petit Jean, and others. Cavalry and infantry could easily cross most of these streams. General Joseph Shelby crossed the Arkansas on September 27, 1863, as a part of his great raid and described the water as only breast deep for his horses and with a sandy bottom. Easy to cross by man and beast, the flowing water was a hazard to the wagons and cannon, which necessitated ferry boats for crossing. Both road markers and Civil War road designation mark these fords, which were the only locations passable for moving armies. Such designations are found on the Arkansas River and Highway 23 at Ozark, Highway 22 at Dardanelle, 430 at Van Buren and at other sites.

The Arkansas Civil War Sesquicentennial Commission, formed by Act 635 of the Arkansas General Assembly, was organized to expand our



Civil War Trails included in the Arkansas Heritage Trails System.

understanding of the Civil War and to preserve the historical and educational sites located around the state. A very successful effort, these road signs and markers remind us of our heritage and understanding of this great struggle.

It also reminds us of our commitment to promote unity of our country and our state. As the monument at Haguewood Prairie states, Not North or South, East or West; WE ARE ONE!!!



2014 Prairie D'Ane Re-enactment Photo by Paul Ridgell

NEACWHT works on markers, flags

By Danny Honnoll
NEACWHT Chair

It has been a tough time watching statues and markers being taken down across this nation. Individuals are saying take down statues and move them to museums. Museums do not want statues – statues are made to be outside and are outside museums by them selves. A soft stance on the Confederate flag over the years has eroded history across this nation. There is no end to what some of these groups want. They are even damaging statues in cemeteries and damaging tombstones. I do not understand. I have never heard of a statue killing anyone. I doubt they do in the next 100 years. We are not just talking about Confederate markers; they want any historical marker moved for the sake of change. They can rewrite history, but they cannot change it.

On a brighter note: The Southern Confederate Heritage Park in Jonesboro raised new flags on May 2, 2017. The Bennington American flag, Arkansas state flag, Second National Confederate flag and the 30th Arkansas battle flag. Chairman Danny Honnoll emceed the Jonesboro Memorial Day Ceremony honoring area veterans. More than 300 attended the ceremony this year. Honnoll recognized veterans from all wars and noted the names for the Federals and Rebels at the base of the Battle of Jonesboro historical marker. The event took place on the site where the Battle of Jonesboro took place in 1862.

In honor of the 155th Anniversary of Battle of Jonesboro new flags were placed August 2, 2017. The historical flags of honor were Star Spangled Banner US flag, Georgia State Flag, 30th Arkansas Infantry battle flag and the Gen. Earl Van Dorn battle flag.

We have had to hire individuals to mow the park due to the health of our members. We have mowed the park 12 times this year. If anyone wants to help mow our park please contact me at danny@honnoll.com.

We held our meeting on August 16 and had 18 in attendance. Honnoll



M. Ray Jones, Civil War preservationist Gene Roebuck, Danny Honnoll

gave a talk on “North and South the Big Guns of War.”

Dr. Michael Dougan received the first Ransom Bettis Award from Five Rivers Historical Preservation Inc. of Pocahontas on August 14. It was for his lifetime of work preserving the history of northeast Arkansas during the Civil War. Congrats. Dr. D.

Longtime member Leonard Pickle changed our flag at the water wheel at Hardy at the Battle of Morgan’s Mill marker on Aug. 17th. We always fly the CSA First National flag. Normally Bobbie and Dale Barnett are the ones who care of our pole at Hardy. Dale Barnett is improving a little at a time but is still a long way to get to where he can walk! Keep Dale in your prayers! The NEACWHTC is going to support Randal Freeman of Little Rock with a dedication on Oct. 7 at Big Flat.

Poinsett County’s Sylvia Witts contacted us to help with placement of a marker to Gen. M. Jeff Thompson. She is to get back with us with a date soon.

The NEACWHTC has a historical marker marking Civil War actions that took place in western Craighead County. The UDC, SCV, MOSB and North East Arkansas Southern Heritage Foundation have helped sponsor this marker. David and Tara Bellomy helped set the post and we are getting closer to setting a date for dedication of the marker.

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

Got News?

Send information about your upcoming Civil War-related activity to: *Arkansas Battlefield Update*, AHPP, 1100 North Street, Little Rock, AR 72201, or to mark.christ@arkansas.gov.

Prairie Grove park increases by 40 acres

By Alan Thompson
NWACWHT Chair

Thanks to grants from the American Battlefield Protection Program and the Civil War Trust, Prairie Grove Battlefield State Park has preserved 40 more acres of the battlefield. Awarded in April, the grants protect a portion of the west end of the December 7, 1862, battlefield where heavy fighting late in the day occurred between the Confederate troops of Brigadier General Mosby M. Parsons and the Army of the Frontier's Kansas Division under command of Brigadier General James G. Blunt. As the sun was setting, Parsons' Brigade made one last attempt to sweep the Federal troops from the field but were compelled to fall back, ending the Battle of Prairie Grove.

On September 30, 2017, Prairie Grove Battlefield State Park will host a

"Tracing Your Civil War Ancestor" workshop beginning at 10 a.m. Cost is \$10 and pre-registration is required.

If you like artillery, there are plenty of opportunities in northwest Arkansas to see it in action. At Pea Ridge National Military Park demonstrations will take place on September 23, October 7 and October 21. You won't want to miss the September 23 event as it will feature five cannons. Prairie Grove will host its last artillery demonstration of the summer on September 16.

A cavalry school will be held at Prairie Grove on September 23-24. Visitors are welcome to come out and watch the horse soldiers sharpen their skills.

On October 14 the staff of Prairie Grove Battlefield will offer a guided driving tour of sites related to the Prairie Grove Campaign including Rhea's Mill, Cane Hill,

and Walnut Grove. Attendees will drive their own vehicles while following park staff. A fee will be required.

The archeological work being conducted at Pea Ridge has come to an end for the year. Researchers have been working in the Leetown area of the battlefield and are interested in how the fighting impacted the civilian landscape. At least four structures of the village have been identified. Many of Leetown's buildings were used as hospitals after the battle.

For information on these and other events coming up, please visit the Prairie Grove Battlefield State Park website at <https://www.arkansasstateparks.com/prairiegrovebattlefield/> and the Pea Ridge National Military Park website at <https://www.nps.gov/peri/index.htm>.



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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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