

**Arkansas Civil War Sesquicentennial
Commission Meeting**

January 30, 2008

MacArthur Museum of Arkansas Military History
Little Rock, Arkansas

Members Present

Richard Davies, Director, Department of Parks and Tourism
Dora Kate Lee, President, Arkansas Division - United Daughters of the Confederacy
Jim Branson, Stuttgart
Jerelyn Duncan, Interim Chairman, Martin Luther King Commission
Bill Gatewood, Director, Old State House Museum
Tommy Dupree, Jacksonville, Reed's Bridge Battlefield Preservation Society
Wendy Richter, Director, Arkansas History Commission
Mark Christ, Designee, Department of Arkansas Heritage
Dr. George Lankford, Batesville
Don Hamilton, Central Arkansas Civil War Heritage Trail and Civil War Roundtable of Arkansas
Charles Durnett, President, Arkansas Division, Sons of Confederate Veterans
Jamie Brandon, Arkansas Archeological Survey at Southern Arkansas University
Carolyn Ashcraft, Director, Arkansas State Library

Members Absent

Tom DeBlack, Arkansas Historical Association
Bill Stanley, Jonesboro
John Scott from Pea Ridge National Military Park
Ellen DiMaggio, Little Rock
Danny Honnoll, President, Arkansas Civil War Heritage Trails Foundation
Ernest Cunningham, Helena

Visitors

Russell Baker, Arkansas Genealogical Society
Cathie Matthews and Marynell Branch, Department of Arkansas Heritage.

Minutes

The meeting convened at 10:17 a.m., Chairman Tommy Dupree presiding.

The minutes were discussed and Wendy Richter made a correction regarding potential URLs for the ACWSC website. James Branson moved that the minutes be accepted as amended. George Lankford seconded. Approved unanimously.

Commission subcommittees met for the remainder of the morning, reconvening at 1 p.m.

Subcommittee reports were tendered as follows:

Sanctioning events around the state (re-enactments, symposia, etc.) that are appropriate observances of the Sesquicentennial

Charles Durnett reported that the committee decided that whether or not an event should be sanctioned will need to be determined on a case by case basis, and that the commission needs to determine what the benefits of sanctioning will be (use of logo, mention on website and other publicity, etc.).

James Branson suggested investigating what criteria were used in sanctioning events for the Arkansas Statehood Sesquicentennial in 1986. Wendy Richter said that the records for that event are at the Arkansas History Commission.

Promoting historic sites around the state that are connected to the Civil War through educational efforts (brochures, websites, etc.)

Commissioners discussed Aristotle's offer to create a Sesquicentennial website pro bono. Discussion included approaching the legislature for funding for an official Civil War historic marker program similar to that of the Civil War Centennial, urging state agencies to produce materials, and approaching Convention and Visitors Bureaus about supporting local and regional efforts (Wendy Richter mentioned that a Clark County Civil War brochure has gone through more than 15,000 copies.)

Richard Davies added that the Department of Parks and Tourism can provide free promotions for these local efforts by putting them on the state tourism website. He also discussed geocaching and its potential to bring people to Arkansas sites.

Promoting publications and archival collections connected to the Civil War in Arkansas and advocating donations of materials to appropriate repositories

Discussion included the possibility of holding an "Antiques Roadshow" type event to which visitors can bring documents for evaluation/copying/scanning. The Arkansas Genealogical Society is having such an event on March 29 and the Commission will evaluate the results of that event. The Commission should promote the donation of materials to public repositories.

Discussion of the need for the Commission to urge promotion of books and articles on the Civil War and its effects in Arkansas. This includes such materials as the exemplary volume on the Battle of Mount Elba that the Cleveland County Historical Society recently completed.

The Commission should seek subvention funding for publications on the Civil War and its effects in Arkansas.

Richard Davies suggested forming a subcommittee to try to identify holes in research into the Civil War era in Arkansas so that efforts can be made to research those areas. Tommy

Dupree suggested getting on the agenda of the Arkansas Historical Association conference in order to discuss this with attendees. Mark Christ said that he would contact Tom DeBlack about getting on the agenda.

Promoting local observances that tell the local story

Discussion included finding ways to energize local groups to begin planning for the Sesquicentennial. George Lankford mentioned that historical community in Batesville already is enthusiastically planning activities. He suggested that each county should be challenged to select at least one event or theme to promote during the Sesquicentennial.

The Commission should approach the Arkansas Municipal League and the Association of Arkansas Counties to get the word out to plan local commemorations of local stories, and to promote the heritage tourism aspects of such events.

Richard Davies suggested preparing a DVD on the Sesquicentennial that can be presented to service groups, local governments, etc. Bill Gatewood suggested that podcasts be created on Sesquicentennial events, issues, etc.

Mark Christ will draft a letter from Chairman Dupree to go to all mayors and county judges telling about the ACWSC and the need for and potential of local observances.

Supporting efforts to teach and research Arkansas Civil War history in the state's schools and universities

Jamie Brandon said that the subcommittee determined that it needs to canvas what is being taught at the high school and college level regarding the Civil War and that they will meet again to brainstorm ways to get Civil War Arkansas into the high school curriculum. He also mentioned that integrating such history into other areas of studies is a possibility.

Richard Davies suggested the possibility of offering an Arkansas in the Civil War college class during the Sesquicentennial; Tommy Dupree noted that a Trans-Mississippi Civil War focus also would work.

George Lankford suggested that high schools and junior high schools would welcome visiting lecturers with good a-v presentations. The Commission discussed looking at such resources as "The Edge of Conflict" films from the 1990s and making them more widely available.

Supporting efforts to preserve and interpret the state's Civil War sites and documentary heritage and artifacts

The Commission again discussed having events to bring in documents and artifacts.

Discussion included seeking funding for acquisition and preservation of historic Civil War-related sites in the state. Jamie Brandon noted that the Archeological Conservancy is a possible source of funding.

The commission discussed historical markers for uninterpreted Civil War resources in the state. Richard Davies noted that earlier marker efforts (the state centennial and sesquicentennial, the Civil War centennial) produced markers that are not maintained because the organizations that created them are no longer in existence. Dora Kate Lee noted that the United Daughters of the Confederacy have a program for caring for UDC-sponsored markers.

Develop a plan and procedure to secure funding and appropriations, and to secure, accept, and spend donations, and develop a legislative package for the 2009 Arkansas General Assembly

Jim Branson reported that he had talked with Rep. Bobby Glover, who suggested contacting the Secretary of State's office, which funded the state sesquicentennial celebration in 1986. He stated that each committee needs to figure how much funding their initiatives will need for the Civil War Sesquicentennial, and that numbers are needed by the next meeting.

Richard Davies agreed that specific amounts are needed so that they can be provided to the Governor, who has a mandate to maintain a balanced budget. He mentioned that not all of the funding has to go to the ACWSC – some can be requested as part of agency budgets. The funding for the next three years must be submitted by May 2008.

Mark Christ will look through the minutes of the Commission's meetings to determine what has been suggested for funding and will send a list to the Commission prior to the next meeting.

Tommy Dupree suggested seeking partners for funding, then seeking matching funds from other sources.

Cathie Matthews mentioned that the sponsor of the bill creating the ACWSC, Robbie Wills of Conway, is the incoming Speaker of the House.

Marynell Branch suggested that the Commission might want to focus more on the Governor's Office and General Assembly rather than the Secretary of State's office for funding.

As part of the discussion, the Commission decided to invite Speaker Wills, Larry Malley of the University of Arkansas Press, Tom Dillard of the UA Special Collections department, and Alan Weatherly of AETN to the next meeting. Representatives of Aristotle Internet will be at the next meeting, too.

Develop an official logo for the ACWSC

Bill Gatewood reported that the Mangan-Holcomb firm has been asked to produce two draft logos, which will be distributed for comment to the Commission. We hopefully will have a finished logo by the next meeting.

Explore ways to ensure that the Sesquicentennial celebration is inclusive of all Arkansans

George Lankford reported that this committee met on January 24. The minutes from that meeting are attached below, as is a document addressing the history of slavery in Arkansas. The Commission suggested adding Native Americans to the list.

The Commission discussed having a reenactment of the legislative debate to pass the Thirteenth Amendment at the Old State House to mark the April 14, 1865, passage of the act, which officially ended slavery in Arkansas.

George Lankford mentioned that the Commission needs to involve a more diverse group in the planning stages of the event and noted that the legislation does not preclude adding ad hoc committees.

Jerelyn Duncan reported that she is gauging the reaction of the African-American community to the proposed event and is getting positive responses. She said that the event would not adversely affect existing Juneteenth celebrations and suggested bringing Juneteenth organizations around the state into the planning process.

The committee reports being completed, Jim Branson moved for adjournment. Mark Christ seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

(The next meeting of the ACWSC will be held on February 27, 2008, at the MacArthur Museum of Arkansas Military History.)

**Minutes of Inclusiveness Committee 24 January 2008
Arkansas Civil War Sesquicentennial Commission**

Present: Ashcraft, Cunningham, Duncan, Lankford
Absent: Brandon, DiMaggio

The committee first brainstormed about what segments of the population of Arkansas might not have a direct connection to the Civil War or might be overlooked in the programming of the various commemorative activities. The list was brief:

- African Americans (issues of slave and free black participation in the Civil War in various roles, as well as the major issue of the impact of the Civil War on African American life subsequently)
- Descendants of Unionists (including Union sympathizers, Arkansas participants, both black and white, in Union military units, and victims of jayhawking/terrorism)

- Women, children, and families (focus on women’s roles in the war and the impact of the war on the civilian families)

The committee discussed at length the need for a major event during the Sesquicentennial years that would emphasize one of the major results of the war, the end of slavery in Arkansas. The consensus was that the entire population of the state needed to be caught up in a major commemorative event marking the end of slavery. The use of “Juneteenth” celebrations was discussed, and the committee was left with questions as to whether the event should be a one-time-only State-sponsored celebration and whether the African American community would be enthusiastic about having a tradition with its own history co-opted for the Sesquicentennial; Duncan said she would make inquiries.

The question of what would be the most appropriate date for such a celebration was raised. The committee examined a set of notes on the history of emancipation in Arkansas and discussed the ways in which freedom came to Arkansas slaves, including the First and Second Confiscation Acts, Federal control of the state, the Emancipation Proclamation, and the passage of the Thirteenth Amendment. The group concluded that the celebration ought to be set for a date when slavery was totally abolished for Arkansas, rather than piecemeal, and that led the committee to focus on the question of whether Arkansas formally ratified the Thirteenth Amendment. Since no one present knew, it was decided to ask the State Library researchers to provide the answer.* The discussion and the issues are to be presented to the Commission at its next meeting for suggestions and direction for future committee meetings.

A final question was raised concerning the Arkansas Jewish community: are there Civil War commemorative issues that should be discussed? Everyone confessed ignorance, so the group agreed to seek more information before the next meeting.

George Lankford

- This was done -- April 14, 1865, was entered into the committee’s Arkansas Emancipation Chronicle.

Arkansas Emancipation Chronicle

Sources:

Orville W. Taylor: *Negro Slavery in Arkansas* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1958)
 Berlin, Ira, Barbara J. Fields, Steven F. Miller, Joseph P. reidy, and Leslie S. Rowland.
 1992 “The Destruction of Slavery, 1861-1865,” in *Slaves No More. Three Essays on Emancipation and the Civil War* (CUP), 1-76.

- 1819 Creation of Ark Terr: slavery survived by 2 votes against Taylor Amendment (Taylor 21)
 (which prohibited introduction of slaves and mandated emancipation within 25 yrs)
- 1839 Ark. GA passed law permitting individual emancipation (Taylor 238)
- 1857 Dred Scott case: US Sup Ct said blacks could not be citizens, because writers
 of Constitution did not envision it (Taylor 256)
- Aug 1861 Congress passed, Lincoln signed the First Confiscation Act: “all property used in support of the rebellion [including slaves, was] ‘subject of prize and capture wherever found” (Berlin et al 21).

Fall 1861 In summer and fall Confederates used slave labor to build fortifications on Atlantic and Gulf coasts and inland waterways. “When Union troops tested Confederate lines, they encountered slave-built fortifications and often the slaves themselves. In such circumstances, the confiscation act became a veritable emancipation proclamation” (Berlin et al. 25).

Dec 1861 Congress showed “growing impatience with a policy that protected the property of unrepentant rebels.” House defeated reaffirmation of Crittenden resolution and passed resolution calling for emancipation of slaves of disloyal masters in all military jurisdictions (Berlin et al. 28f).

Spring 1862 Lincoln repeatedly affirmed his support “for gradual, compensated emancipation,” and in April Congress resolved to provide financial assistance to any state that enacted such a measure” (Berlin et al. 29).

April 1862 Congress abolished slavery in DC, authorizing compensation to slaveholders. Its passage “constituted the first time that the federal government had directly legislated the emancipation of any slave” (Berlin et al. 30).

Feb 1862 “West of the Miss. River, military events transformed federal forces into an army of liberation. [Curtis won at Pea Ridge and pushed through Arkansas.] By the time he reached Helena, a considerable number of fugitive slaves were following in his train. . . he issued certificates of freedom on the basis of the First Confiscation Act, making the Union-controlled portion of Arkansas a haven for fugitive slaves” (Berlin et al. 34).

July 1862 Lincoln met with border-state congressmen, warned them that slavery was coming to an end and urged them to adopt state laws setting up a gradualist plan of compensated emancipation. They rejected his request. (Berlin et al. 40).

July 1862 Congress on July 17 approved the Second Confiscation Act, which “declared slaves owned by disloyal masters ‘forever free of their servitude’ and ordered that they be ‘not again held as slaves’. . . In effect, the new law deemed free all fugitive slaves who came into army lines professing that their owners were disloyal, as well as those slaves who fell under army control as Union troops occupied enemy territory. . . The Militia Act, which became law on the same day, provided for their employment in ‘any military or naval service for which they may be found competent’ and granted freedom to slave men so employed, as well as to their families, if they, too, were owned by disloyal masters” (Berlin et al. 40f).

Sept 1862 “The momentous events of July 1862 did not stop with the confiscation and military employment of slaves. On July 22, Lincoln informed the cabinet of his intention to issue a proclamation of general emancipation in the seceded states.” They urged him to wait for a major military victory to issue the proclamation, to which he agreed. After Antietam, on Sept. 22 Lincoln issued the preliminary Emancipation Proclamation, “serving notice that on January 1 he would declare ‘then, thenceforward, and forever free’ all the slaves in those states still in rebellion” (Berlin et al. 42).

“During the fall of 1862, federal commanders began to organize contraband camps, placing sympathetic officers – generally regimental chaplains or other men of humanitarian bent — in charge” (Berlin et al. 45).

“In the summer and fall of 1862 the first black soldiers entered Union ranks in the Sea Islands of South Carolina, in southern Louisiana, and in Kansas” (Berlin et al. 47).

Jan 1 1863 “The Emancipation Proclamation fulfilled his pledge to free all slaves in the states still in rebellion. . . Gone were references to compensation for loyal slaveholders and colonization of former slaves. . . Abolitionists, black and white, marked the occasion with solemn thanksgiving that the nation had recognized its moral responsibility, that the war against slavery had at last been joined, and that human bondage was on the road to extinction. But none could match the slaves’ elation. With unrestrained – indeed, unrestrainable – joy, slaves celebrated the Day of Jubilee” (Berlin et al. 49f).

1864 “With slavery in shambles and Northern victory increasingly sure, unionists in much of the occupied South concluded the business of emancipation. Federal officials and army commanders turned on their slaveholding allies and made it clear that the liquidation of slavery was prerequisite for readmission to the Union. Antislavery unionists, previously stymied by slaveholding loyalists, took control of the unionist coalitions and pressed for immediate abolition. Early in 1864 Arkansas loyalists enacted constitutional changes ending slavery. Unionists in states partly or wholly exempt from the Emancipation Proclamation followed suit, in Louisiana late in 1864 and in Tennessee early in 1865. As Lincoln had hoped, these new state constitutions placed emancipation upon firmer ground, beyond the reach of judicial challenge to the confiscation acts or the Emancipation Proclamation” (Berlin et al. 69).

Jan 1865 “The previous spring [1864], with reelection in doubt, congressional support for emancipation had faltered. The Senate had approved a constitutional amendment abolishing slavery, but when it came

before the House, the Democratic opposition had denied it the two-thirds majority required for passage. In January 1865, with Lincoln reelected and the Republicans securely in power, the House approved the amendment and forwarded it to the states for ratification” (Berlin et al. 70).

March 1865 “Lincoln signed legislation creating the Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands (or Freedmen’s Bureau, as it became known) to supervise the transition from slavery to freedom. A joint resolution adopted the same day liberated the wives and children of black soldiers, regardless of their owners’ loyalty, and thereby provided a claim to freedom for tens of thousands of border-state slaves whose bondage had been impervious to law or presidential edict” (Berlin et al. 70).

April 14, 1865 Arkansas GA ratified the 13th Amendment.

June 1865 “In Texas, where the Confederate surrender came a full two months after Appomattox, black people celebrated ‘Juneteenth’ as emancipation day” (Berlin et al. 71).

Dec 1865 “In the concise, clipped language of the law, the new amendment – ratified in December 1865 – summarized the monumental changes wrought by the war: ‘Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted, shall exist within the United States, or any place subject to their jurisdiction’” (Berlin et al. 71).

“Over the course of the war, the slaves’ insistence that their own enslavement was the root of the conflict – and that a war for the Union must necessarily be a war for freedom – strengthened their friends and weakened their enemies. Their willingness to offer their loyalty, their labor, and even their lives pushed Northerners, from common soldiers to leaders of the first rank, to do what had previously seemed unthinkable: to make property into persons, to make slaves into soldiers, and, in time, to make all black people into citizens, the equal of any in the Republic. White Southerners could never respond in kind. But they too came to understand the link between national union and universal liberty. And when the deed was done, a new truth prevailed where slavery had reigned: that men and women could never again be owned and that citizenship was the right of all. The destruction of slavery transformed American life forever.” (Berlin et al. 75f).