

**Arkansas Civil War Sesquicentennial
Commission Meeting**
July 30, 2008
Trapnall Hall
Little Rock, Arkansas

Members Present

Richard Davies, Director, Department of Parks and Tourism
Mark Christ, Designee, Department of Arkansas Heritage
Dr. George Lankford, Batesville, Senate Pro Tem Designee
Tommy Dupree, Jacksonville, Governor Appointee
Mark Kalkbrenner, Arkansas Division – Sons of Confederate Veterans
Don Hamilton, Governor Appointee
Danny Honnoll, President – Arkansas Civil War Heritage Trails Foundation
Dr. Jamie Brandon, Governor Appointee
Jim Branson, House Speaker Designee
Jerry Armstrong, North Little Rock, House Speaker Designee
Bill Gatewood, Director – Old State House Museum
Ellen DiMaggio, Senate Pro Tem Designee
Ernest Cunningham – Governor Appointee
Carolyn Ashcraft – Director, Arkansas State Library
Sam Wang – Sons of Union Veterans

Members Absent

Dora Kate Lee, President, Arkansas Division – United Daughters of the Confederacy
John Scott, NPS – Pea Ridge National Military Park
Dr. Wendy Richter – Arkansas History Commission
Dushun Scarbrough – Martin Luther King Commission
Laura Miller – President, Arkansas Historical Association

Visitors

Cathie Matthews, Director, Department of Arkansas Heritage
Leslie Greenwood, Aristotle
Yvonne O. Morales – Martin Luther King Commission
Carl Carlson Drexler – College of William & Mary
Ian Beard – Old State House
Jack E. Hill – TeleVision for Arkansas

Tom Dupree called the meeting to order at 10:08 a.m. He introduced new members Mark Kalkbrenner, Sons of Confederate Veterans, and Samuel Wang, Sons of Union Veterans. He also introduced Yvonne Morales, who sat in for Dushun Scarbrough of the Martin Luther King Commission.

Tom Dupree called for approval of the minutes from the April 22, 2008 commission meeting. Danny Honnoll moved and Jamie Branson seconded the approval of the April 22, 2008 minutes. The motion passed.

Overview of ACWSC Website

Leslie Greenwood from Aristotle presented an overview of the entire website. She has been working with Mark Christ to get the website going and everything is just about finished. There is a site administrative tool that will make updating the site easy. The only things that are not complete are the rotating main page flash for the large image so that the photos will change and the artist is working on that. Before the site is launched, Aristotle will run a vulnerability scan on the programming in order to make sure that nobody can hack into the site. She and Mark believe the site will be ready to launch the late part of the week of August 3, 2008 thru August 9, 2008. Leslie navigated through the entire site and advised the commission on what can be changed by the commission and what has to be changed by Aristotle.

There was discussion and Richard Davies asked about linking to other sites from the Arkansas Civil War Sesquicentennial site. Leslie advised that this feature is already on the website and can be accessed by the commissioners via the admin tool. It also allows for a photo and caption. A user name and password will be set up for commission members to have access to changing some items on the website. This is a client based update tool, but there are some areas that only Aristotle can change or update. Leslie suggested that those changes need to come to her through Mark Christ. Per Richard Davies' suggestion, Leslie agrees that a linking campaign is a good idea. She explained how Parks and Tourism's linking policy page is set up.

George Lankford asked how the website will be advertised to the public. Leslie suggested a press release. Richard Davies stated that Parks and Tourism could also do something that they will fund.

Mark suggested a formal press conference to announce the website.

Richard asked Mark C. about the cost so far for what Aristotle has done with the website and Mark stated that Aristotle has done everything free so far. There is a budget for the webpage for the coming year. Leslie will be Mark's contact and Mark will be the commission's contact. Leslie will set him up with a username and password and if anyone else needs to be set up, Mark can let Leslie know.

Richard asked if there is already a domain name picked out. Leslie stated that the domain name is ArkansasCivilWar150.com. Mark asked Leslie to just send him an email with this information.

The commission members all agree that Aristotle has done a great job with the website.

Report on Budget Request and Preserve America Grant

Mark Christ has finalized a budget for the next biennium that is split into operations and capital expenditures. The operations budget includes a request for a new staff member, a part time administrative assistant, funding for commission meetings (4 meetings in Little Rock and 2 other in-state meetings yearly), \$3,000 a year over two years for the website and podcast, and \$20,000 per year over two years for design and publication of commission materials, for a total of \$156,630. The budget for capital expenditures includes \$100,000 over 2 years for a historic marker program, \$300,000 over 2 years for battlefield preservation, \$20,000 over 2 years for publications with the hopes of getting some type of scholarly publication, probably through the University of Arkansas Press, \$50,000 per year over 2 years for grants for local events , and \$40,000 for the opening event of the ACWS (moderated discussion of the impact of the Civil War on Arkansas to be televised on AETN as well as other associated activities at the Old State House) for a total of \$560,000 for capital expenditures and total budget of \$716,630.

Tom stated that the commission members still need to get in contact with legislators. Ernest asked about any correspondence to the governor's office on the budget request. Cathie stated that we do not have any and Richard stated that the Governor needs to know about the budget request on the front end instead of later. Legislators need to let the Governor know that this is something that they are interested in.

Richard asked Mark to send a copy of the budget out in an email to everyone so they will have it available when talking to legislators about the budget request. Jamie stated that it would be nice to have a packet to present to the legislators. Ernest offered to address the budget issue with the Governor's office since he is there often. Cathie agreed that this would be fine.

Carolyn Ashcraft inquired about contacts. Richard replied that Robbie Wills would be a key contact since he sponsored the bill that created the ACWSC. Cathie offered to send Ernest a list of other names that would be helpful contacts. Tom stated that John Paul Capps and the A&P commissions around the state needs to be contacted to see if they will get involved. Richard Bearden would also be a good contact.

Mark reported that he has written a grant to present to Preserve America requesting \$50,000 to establish a historic marker program with about half going to a hired consultant to help develop a marker program to tell the commission which way to go. This program will hopefully develop into a full-scale marker program, which the state does not have currently. This may help with the budget request. He expects to hear something within the next couple of months.

Ernest stated that capital expenditures are hard to get. Cathie asked if Mark could write something up for Ernest to present to the Governor and he agreed.

Report on "Holes in History" Meeting, with Recommendations

Mark stated that the meeting, held on May 20, 2008, at Trapnall Hall was comprised about 20 professional historians and advocates. Three to four hours of discussion.

The topics relating to Arkansas Civil War history that need additional focused research are:

- Experiences of civilians (displacement and destruction, demographic and social effects); Arkansas in the Civil War as opposed to the Civil War in Arkansas
- African-American soldiers in Arkansas
- The Naval war in Arkansas
- Arkansas Unionism and Arkansas's Union soldiers
- Study the motivations that led Arkansawyers to choose sides: It's more complicated than Secessionists vs. Unionists
- The legacy of the Civil War in Arkansas: How it shaped us as a people and how it is viewed today

Projects that should be actively pursued up to and during the Sesquicentennial include:

- Collate the Arkansas Slave Narratives to emphasize the Civil War years
- Republish the Arkansas Adjutant General's Report
- Compile Civil War articles from the Arkansas Historical Quarterly

(The Arkansas Historical Association met Saturday before last (July 19, 2008) and discussed compiling Civil War articles. Per Tom DeBlack, instead of republishing old articles from the Quarterly, it would be a good idea to solicit new articles, and perhaps do one or two special editions devoted to the Civil War Sesquicentennial as well as index previously published.)

- Gather and publish maps and illustrations of Civil War Arkansas
- Reprint Margaret Ross's Chronicles of Arkansas
- Compile letters from soldiers that appeared in newspapers, including letters from Union soldiers to their hometowns in the North; the latter can provide an outsider's view of the state
- Annotate and publish Civil War-period letters

Richard added that he had a discussion with Mark about making a list on the website of all the units from elsewhere so that when people come to visit they can research their ties with the state during the Civil War.

George talked about one hole net to catch materials from family members and collectors pertaining to the Civil War. Richard asked Leslie if this information can be put on the website to solicit information from collectors and family members pertaining to the Civil War. Mark agreed that this would be a good idea.

Carolyn asked if anyone was at the July 19 meeting from the Encyclopedia of Arkansas. Mark C. stated that there was no one from the Encyclopedia of Arkansas, but Brian Robertson was there from the Butler Center.

Ian Beard spoke briefly about the difficulty of finding materials pertaining to the Civil War in Arkansas and suggested putting together a guide that informs people what is offered to them in Arkansas if they had someone who served during the Civil War in Arkansas.

Danny stated that regiments from Arkansas that were at Chickamauga and Gettysburg should be included, and anyone who had ties to Arkansas. Mark C. stated that Texas and Missouri should also be included. Tom stated that all states that had troops here in Arkansas need to be included to draw the tourists in.

George asked what historians had to say. Mark stated that most people thought that there weren't many holes in the history. Tom stated that the reality is that it will take years to write on things that have not been covered; however it was a productive and interesting meeting.

ACWSC Video

Cathie stated that the publicity person has spoken to Richard and we've got the ball rolling. Mark C. and Melissa Whitfield will be involved. Richard stated that there is a roughed out script and gave an overview for new or previously absent members. Basically \$3,000 to \$4,000 can be saved if a lot of footage does not have to be shot. It would be a brief 8 to 10 minute "Rotary Club here's what we're all about" video. Cathie stated that the purpose is to provide an introduction to what the commission is trying to do.

Jack Hill spoke about the footage he has. Richard asked if he was willing to donate his footage and Jack stated that he could work something out with the commission. Tom stated that Jack Hill will be announcing his proposal after lunch.

ACWSC Subcommittee Duties Reports

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

Tom stated that the committee has not met yet, but since Charles Durnett, who died July 4, was on their committee and he was the leader, some information has been lost. Ellen invites new members to join this committee since they are short on members. Tom agreed that members could volunteer to join the committees that are short of members or they would be appointed. (Samuel Wang has joined this subcommittee.)

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

Richard stated that the key is to get the website and the video going and in the long run to get other agencies to promote the Arkansas Civil War Sesquicentennial.

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

Carolyn suggested compiling a list of what is available through word of mouth and also putting something on the website. She also suggested developing bookmarks and handouts. She has met

with the Grant County Museum and they are going to gear up and be active in the promotion of the Arkansas Civil War Sesquicentennial.

Promoting local observances that tell the local story

George stated that the committee is not aware of any new information.

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

Jamie stated that, coming off of the Holes in History meeting, the committee will be working on the list they came up with. The committee will be working more on the High school level lesson plan. Tom stated that Carolyn may be able to help on the junior high or middle school level lesson plans. She will be looking to the Department of Education for some help. Mark K. added that the information that the Department of Education requires would be a good lesson plan to use.

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

Carolyn deferred to Mark C. and Mark stated that the subcommittee had an idea to have an Antiques Road Show for people to bring in artifacts to be evaluated and photographed or scanned.

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 stated the committee should commend Mark C. for putting together the budget. Jim stated that he would like to meet with Tom and Mark over lunch to discuss ideas for their committee to meet with legislators. He is going to meet with the Speaker of the House, Benny Petrus. Then maybe the commission can revisit with his committee following lunch.

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

George stated that there was no meeting since the last report. The committee is waiting to see how the annual themes lay out. The wants to figure out how to promote any type of budgetary events associated with the Arkansas Civil War Sesquicentennial. Jamie stated that the website will probably help in this process.

Tom addressed new members. It would be good idea for the committee to get behind one event each year through the five year period and support those events on a local basis. The Sanction Committee and the Inclusiveness Committee will be involved in this process.

Ellen made a proposal to the general commission members to think about what to promote and sanction. What will be the qualifiers? Carolyn stated that the commission needs to check on sanctioning guidelines.

Mark will send Wendy an email and ask her if the Arkansas History Commission has the sanctioning criteria from the state sesquicentennial.

Discussion of Annual Themes and ACWSC events

Mark Christ stated that the commission has a start and an end with relevance to the Civil War. This is the first event and the closing event. The first one is the program about the

relevance of the Civil War and the last one is the anniversary of the end of slavery in Arkansas.

Richard offered an idea of geographically moving the events around the state.

Ellen stated that she appreciates the idea of why did you join or get involved. Some people got involved to protect their own properties, others for other reasons. George said it would be worthwhile to study the strategies slaves had to come up with to make decisions about the Union army? Richard stated that another angle was that a lot of what happened was really not about Arkansas. We were sort of pawns in a way. Jamie suggested focusing on Arkansas's role outside of Arkansas.

Jack Hill added that William Baxter's book gives a vivid account of Civil War events in Fayetteville over a 3 year period. Richard asked if the book is in the bibliography for the website. Mark said he believed it is.

Richard suggested compiling a list by year of suggestions, and then the commission can decide what makes sense historically or geographically wise from there.

Mark clarified that the commission is looking at two different things. One is selecting a theme that people out in the state will be telling the local story. The second issue is what the commission wants to do as a signature event.

George discussed having a basic theme for each year and how to link the state events. Richard suggest that with geography the events can start off in Little Rock and then move to Northwest Arkansas in 1862, then East of the Mississippi in 1863 events, and moved to Southwest Arkansas in 1864 and 1865 would be emancipation back in Little Rock. Mark C. suggested Helena in 1863.

Jamie discusses themes for 2013 would be Northwest and Southwest Arkansas. George stated that the theme for 2012 can be "A Divided Arkansas." Jamie stated that a signature event can be done in Southwest Arkansas. Richard stated that the theme doesn't have to tie completely to where you are at the time, the geography would make sense. For 2013, George suggested a theme similar to Batesville Diaries (collection), which is the view of a teenage girl during the time of the war.

Tom Dupree adjourned meeting for lunch at 11:35 a.m.

Reconvened 1:13 p.m.

Continuation of Discussion of Annual Themes and ACWSC

George asked Mark Christ about his book, *Rugged and Sublime*, and if he had a basic statewide theme. Mark states that the book doesn't really have a statewide theme. Jamie added that everyone should think about it and maybe address the issue at a later date. Richard stated that the theme does not have to go along with geography.

Richard stated that he liked the idea about Arkansans elsewhere tying to Helena. Mark stated that Helena was really the springboard for the capture of Little Rock. Jamie stated that 2014 is still left to decide. Richard suggested civilian life. Mark added that it is a good year for that theme and Jamie agrees.

Mark C. stated that Pea Ridge is planning a big sesquicentennial event. They are building up to it now by having an annual event where they are inviting as many descendants of soldiers that fought at battles to come. At the first year, John Scott asked if anyone had a descendant who fought at Pea Ridge and about 40% of the people stood up.

Richard stated that Prairie Grove does a reenactment every other year and it is coming up this year – 2008. So they would be having a reenactment that year if it is an even year. Richard likes the idea of a scholarly discussion or something about the particular theme that is covered by AETN.

Mark C. suggested doing something mid-year in 2012, because there are several events going on that year. George questions audience for event when we leave the center of the state.

Bill suggested using the themes for the Annual Civil War Seminar at the Old State House.

Carolyn asked about driving guide of war sites. Mark stated that there are two. There is one that needs to be updated before 2011 and the other a 4-state map that covers Northwest Arkansas and the adjoining areas of the surrounding states. Carolyn asked if there is anything to tie in the 7th graders who are in Arkansas History with the GPS material. She also asked if anything could be done to include children such as an author panel event. Richard believes the commission can and also suggested events to coincide with the sesquicentennial events.

Mark K. stated that a group has been talking about events for the Sesquicentennial. In 2011, they have discussed having events such as reunions, and in 2012 in White Sulfur Springs and Pine Bluff. Mark C. thought that it would work nicely.

Richard asked Mark C. about network of people in other states that have units here that can send commission members some information.

Carolyn asked Mark C. to make sure all of these other websites are linked to ACWSC site.

Carolyn added that Grant County will definitely do something regarding Jenkins' Ferry. She also stated that there is a family that wants to donate money to get a larger marker at Jenkins' Ferry. Mark K. stated that he is on the Jenkins' Ferry committee

Ellen asked if the site was protected from the public. Mark replied that it is.

Mark K. stated that next July 2009 the National reunion for Sons of Confederate Veterans will be held in Hot Springs. We should have a booth and those people will be attending the Sesquicentennial. Mark C. stated that the ACWSC video should be done by then and there is a print order in for brochures by then. Richard asked who is handling registration and suggested sending vacation kits out to registrants of the National Reunion for Sons of Confederate Veterans. Mark C. can get some Heritage Trail maps to Park and Tourism or can have some for the booth. He asked Danny to send him a list of registrants (about 600).

New Business

Tom Dupree introduced guest Jack Hill, who made a pitch for his services to create a 1 hour documentary on the Civil War in Arkansas to coincide with Sesquicentennial of the Civil War.

Jack Hill of TeleVision for Arkansas stated that he has done several ½ hour documentaries that can be found in several public libraries in the state of Arkansas. At the suggestion of Tom DeBlack, Jack has come to the commission to pitch his idea of what the documentary should cover. Jack currently has about 20 to 25 hours of archived video that may be used in the documentary. Jack handed out an outline with his business card attached to each member of the ACWSC. The subject is “War in the Sixties.” Jack gave examples of the story line for the piece. Upon completion of his presentation, Jack suggested that the video be shown publicly on the day of the kick off celebration for the Arkansas Civil War Sesquicentennial, with multiple plays thereafter, or a public premier in Little Rock before the first airing the same night on AETN. He also suggested that the video be made available to local Sesquicentennial groups as program resource by placing copies in each public library or by selling copies to raise funds for Civil War related activities.

Carolyn Ashcraft inquired about the cost of this type of production.

Jack stated that ½ hour costs \$20 to \$30 thousand. He suggested about \$40,000 for this hour-long piece. Richard explained to Jack that the committee does not have any money currently. Jack stated that this is the kickoff and sees the documentary as a resource. He is willing to do anything he can to help the cause.

Press Conference for Website and Logo

Mark Christ asked if everyone thinks the press conference to introduce the website and logo is a good idea. There is a Living History event at the Old State House on September 6, 2008. This will be a tentative date for the press conference for the logo and website introduction.

Ellen added that the Living History will be doing an encampment with re-enactors (Arkansans under Confederate rule and then the change over). There will be something

scholarly indoors. Mark C. stated that there will be a built in backdrop with the Living History event. Richard suggested a wide screen be set up inside the Old State House for viewing of the website. George asked if the commission has the okay from the Old State House to have the press conference there. Mark stated that he will be checking with Bill Gatewood. Tom stated that September 6, 2008, is a good day for the press release. Mark C. will do a soft debut prior to the press conference.

The commissioners ask about dates for upcoming ACWSC meetings. The next meeting will be October 29, 2008. Following this meeting the next 4 quarterly meetings will be January 28, 2009, April 29, 2009, July 29, 2009, and October 28, 2009.

Meeting was adjourned by Tom Dupree at 2:30 p.m.