



Cemetery Preservation Workshop

Saturday, October 20, 2001, Arkansas Post National Memorial held a workshop demonstrating the proper and safe methods for basic cemetery stone cleaning and preservation.

Instructed by Brian McCutchen, an architectural historian from the National Park Service Midwest Regional office, the workshop included a brief slide show and hands on demonstration of materials, techniques, chemicals and equipment that are safe and generally used for historic monuments.

Participants also had the opportunity to travel to Skull Cemetery located one mile north of the park boundary and on private land, to apply different techniques to the grave markers. Skull Cemetery is



regarded as the oldest documented European burial site within the State of Arkansas and dates back to the late eighteenth century.

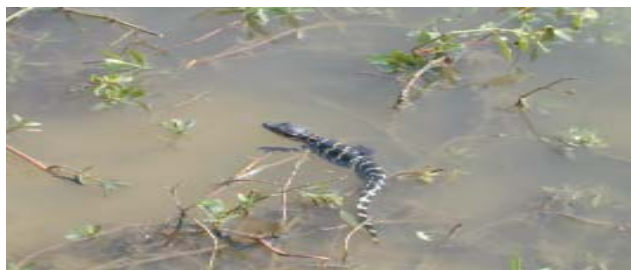
According to Brian, "The goal of the workshop was to demonstrate safe alternatives to the traditional and often harmful practices used in cemetery cleaning."

Alligator Nests Successfully

Labor Day at Arkansas Post National Memorial took on a totally different meaning for one mother in the park – we had our first photographed case of a female alligator tending a nest and the young hatching from it. Using a remote camera, researchers from the University of Arkansas – Monticello (UAM) working with the park's Resource Management division placed the alligator-nesting site under surveillance for several weeks and captured the mother at work. More than twenty baby alligators emerged from the nest and were later observed swimming in the nearby slough. Although it is not clear what the female alligator did exactly, it appears (from the photos) that she assisted with the hatching and removal of



the baby alligators and their eggshells. The female is approximately 8 feet long. A more accurate length will be determined by UAM. The pictures of the babies show their size relative to that of their mother and the lack of injuries are indicative of the care taken by the female when she helped them leave the nest. The young, who are approximately nine inches in length, are expected to grow a couple of inches before winter sets in. *Continued on Page 7*



A Baby Alligator

Superintendent's Scribblin's



In light of the most recent tragedies, I am saddened and depressed by the devastation and the horrible loss of lives. The ruthless acts and the senseless waste confuse me. I keep asking myself, "Why? What have we done to deserve this?" Through it all, I cannot help but reflect on those characteristics of our society that we cherish the most. We are free to speak our mind, we are free to worship however we wish and we are free to seek our own destinies - we are FREE. We face challenge from others around the world that view us as the enemy because we stand up for the less fortunate, those enslaved by tyranny or dominated by despots. Our cause is just and while we, at times, fail to live up to our own ideals due to bigotry, prejudice, or just plain ignorance, we have a system of justice that provides the mechanism to correct our failures. Our history has been one of disagreement and compromise but I like to believe that we have gained from our experiences. We need to recognize where we came from and what we have. Never has there been a more appropriate time to preserve our heritage both cultural and natural. We live in a country of bountiful resources and vibrant, strong-willed people. These are all reflected in our important places- our National and State Parks.

I am particularly proud to have been selected to spend my days in the pursuit of our heritage. For the last 29 years I have had the privilege of working in places that our country has designated as "worth preserving." As a society, when the weight of the world begins to become staggering, we have the opportunity to seek solace in realms where nature rules; where we do not have to deal with all our troubles and can sit back and watch as a bird sings or a flower grows. We gather strength from our forefathers by communing with the same places they sought. The history of our nation is grandiose and best of all, much of it is preserved for us to study, understand and experience. I am thankful that we as a nation have chosen to save these places and I hope that you will join me in the pledge to assure that we, our families, and our descendants continue to have these opportunities.

Edward E. Wood, Jr.



Desiring To Volunteer?

Volunteering is an American tradition that over the years has made an immeasurable contribution to communities, organizations and individuals throughout the country.. Today's volunteers are active, dynamic, creative individuals of all ages who possess the skills, desire, patience and time to accomplish a wide variety of tasks.

The National Park Service Volunteers-In-Parks Program (VIP) was authorized by Public Law 91-357 enacted in 1970. The primary purpose of the VIP program is to provide a vehicle through which the National Park Service can accept and utilize voluntary help and services from the public. The major objective of this program is to utilize this voluntary help in a way that is mutually beneficial to the National Park Service and the volunteer.

Volunteers are accepted from the public without regard to race, creed, religion, age, sex, sexual orientation, national origin, or disability.

For more information about volunteering at Arkansas Post National Memorial, contact the Volunteer Coordinator, Tarona Armstrong by phone at 870-548-2207, by e-mail at tarona_armstrong@nps.gov, or by writing to Arkansas Post National Memorial; Attn: VIP Coordinator, 1741 Old Post Road, Gillett, Arkansas 72055

Arkansas Post Revolutionary War Remnants Lost

Four National Park Service personnel met with the challenge of documenting and mapping Arkansas Post's Revolutionary War engagement of 1783. The question that faced them: how does one record the location and events of a battle that has very little documentation and even less of its engagement site still in existence?

Arkansas Post's Resource Management Specialist Kevin Eads, Connie Langum of the agency's American Battlefield Protection program, and historians from the agency's Midwest Regional Office, Rachel Franklin-Weekley and Brian McCutchen, used geographical positioning equipment to map the historic resources associated with the April 1783 "Colbert Raid" known to exist .



(Left to Right) Kevin Eads, Connie Langum and Brian McCutchen taking satellite readings on the theorized location of the Spanish Fort Carlos III, focal point of the "Colbert Raid" engagement of April, 1783.

According to Langum, "The data that we have collected will be sent to our Washington Office and be compiled with data from other battles of the American Revolution." McCutchen, who served as Arkansas Post historian until February of this year, is compiling additional data.

Using historic maps and descriptions, McCutchen and Eads have computer-generated maps of the historic landscape and overlaid them on modern aerial photos. According to Superintendent Ed Wood, "Due to erosion by the Arkansas River, Arkansas Post's Revolutionary War battlefield is mostly gone. Kevin and Brian's overlays provide a better understanding of how the historic landscape compares with our present environment."

"Over 90 percent of the theorized engagement area has been lost to more than two centuries of erosion and channel changes by the Arkansas River," McCutchen said. "Perhaps 75 percent of the Fort Carlos III site still exists on the tip of the park's peninsula. All else, including the 'habitant coast' and the British advance was lost to the river more than 150 years ago."

I Signed the Constitution!

During the week of September 17-23 2001, Arkansas Post National Memorial celebrated the anniversary of the signing of the Constitution in 1787. Just as the original signers did, eighty-nine visitors placed their signatures on parchment scrolls, which will be returned to the National Constitution Center (NCC's) in Philadelphia, PA and will become part of a permanent archival record in the future Constitution Center.



Ranger Armstrong watches visitors Andy Wood (above) and Tobe Wood (below) place their "John Hancock" on the parchment.



Arkansas Post's Longest Tenured Employee Retiring



After working in the same position for the past 21 years, Charles Layton Mattmiller is retiring as facility manager to enjoy other opportunities

beginning December 2nd. No other employee in the history of the park has worked as long as he has at the park, although several came close.

He first became a park employee on October 19, 1980 after working for the contractor who constructed the visitor center of the park and developed the roads and trails system. His service began during the development and actual construction of the memorial unit and he served on the planning team for the Osotouy unit, formerly Menard Mounds. During his tenure, he witnessed many changes throughout the park, working with four superintendents, all with different management styles.

Charles Layton was responsible for the daily routine of grounds, trails, roads, utilities and buildings maintenance. Also he was responsible for developing a new trail complete with bridges across Alligator Slough. He also was responsible for constructing several fences either for bank stabilization or erosion control in the park. He built cabinets and a desk for the visitor center and completely remodeled the old visitor center into maintenance and resource management offices with a lunch room and work room.

Several buildings have been added under his guidance including the maintenance shop, the flammable liquid storage building and residence #8, which was completed in 1998.

Residence #8



Maintenance Office (remodeled visitor center)

The rapport he established with the youth hired each summer while teaching them leadership and good work skills is evident in the fact that many of them return annually to visit with him. In addition to supervising up to seven youth program employees each summer, he also supervises a permanent staff of three. His generosity was spread throughout the nation as he fought wildland fires in Washington and donated over four weeks of personal leave to those less fortunate in the National Park Service family.

Bridge across Alligator Slough

When asked about retiring he stated “first of all let me say I do not consider myself retiring; I’m changing back to an old profession. I am, however, going to limit my work so that my wife and I may enjoy some traveling along with our children and grandchildren. There is hunting, and gardening along with just a mix of ‘messing around type of stuff’ that young children like to do and of which I want to be a part.”

Charles Layton said one of his funniest memories is when the park was still in the Southwest Region and the regional evaluation team visited Arkansas Post to point out the park’s “shortcomings”. He made a comment that they should stay out of the tall grass and wooded areas because of a severe tick problem within the park. Cal Myers, a friend of his from Chickasaw National Recreation Area was a member of the team. Cal said that he didn’t think Layton could know what ticks were unless he had lived in Oklahoma (Chickasaw) where there was a real tick problem.

Charles Layton thought to himself, *O.K. friend you just have to be baptized Arkansas Post style* and he seized the moment to show off the park alligators and ticks by inviting Cal to join him to search for an alligator. He had been telling Mr. Myers and other maintenance employees from other parks around the region about the growing alligator population at the park. They were all surprised and had their doubts. While hidden from Cal, Charles Layton sprayed real well with insecticide and then led them over a clay hill covered with broom sage, a few briars, grasses, and other weeds common to the area while heading to the slough where alligators usually could be seen. As luck would have it, there were no alligators to be seen. Then Cal began complaining about the Arkansas humidity. He was covered in sweat and little did he know what else until they arrived back at the picnic area and set down at a table to cool off. Mr. Myers noticed his pants legs had a black tint to them and they seemed to be moving. His eyes got big and he exclaimed, “look at the ticks on me. I never saw so many ticks in my life.” Wanting to laugh so hard there were tears in his eyes, Charles Layton took out his pocket knife and began shaving them off Cal’s pant legs much in the same manner you would shave your face.

“We ended up going to my home where he could strip down and take a bath in clorox water and change into fresh clothing,” Charles Layton related. “He placed his clothes in a sealed plastic bag so he could take them back home with him and to prevent the ticks from crawling over the inside of his vehicle. We haven’t had the opportunity to be together in a while, but we do remain friends and even though that episode turned out to be a little more than anticipated, it brings a laugh to both of us.”

When asked how he foresees the future of the facility management in the park, Charles Layton went on to say that he was hesitant to comment on the future of the facility management considering the trying times everyone is going through and not knowing when it will be over. He suspected it will be the ‘same old same old’ as in the past and being asked to do more with less. Funds in all probability are going to be very short. Small parks like Arkansas Post probably will take the hardest hits. He once told a facility manager from a large park who was complaining about his budget that he had the equivalent of six employees and three shovels, “where I came from I have six shovels and three employees.” He said, “There will be new priorities and more efficient management practices will be required. The park will not be able to get any special funds for projects as they have in the past. They are going to have to come up with it themselves and in a lot of instances it can be done. It will be a matter of getting priorities in line like they should be to operate the parks efficiently for visitor safety and satisfaction.”

His job at Arkansas Post has helped finance all three of his children through college. The oldest, Mark, is self employed and resides in Little Rock. Gayla Hearn is a physical and occupational therapist with Baptist Rehab in Stuttgart. Gayla and husband Lee, along with his first grandchild, Caleb reside in Gillett. Amy Wilson is a physical therapist with Grand Prairie Physical Therapy of DeWitt. She and husband, Jimmy, reside in DeWitt with his granddaughter and namesake, Leighton. Maryann, his wife of 45 years, has semi-retired from Planters and Merchants Bank in Gillett and is looking forward to *not* having to pack his lunch box every morning!

The entire staff wishes to express their gratitude to Charles Layton for his dedication and hard work and wish him a safe and happy retirement. He will truly be missed!

Historical People of the Post



Robert Crittenden, first secretary of Arkansas Territory. At the age of 23, Crittenden received his appointment, endorsed by Richard M. Johnson, U.S. House of Representatives and Martin Van Buren's vice president. Vice President, Martin Van Buren pointed out that Robert was

the brother of Sen. John J. Crittenden, of Kentucky and was "that self same Capt. Crittenden who commanded a company of volunteers in the Seminole War." During the summer of 1819 Crittenden wasted little time taking command of Arkansas when Governor Miller failed to arrive. As acting governor, Crittenden convened the three judges to make up the first territorial legislature. He appointed circuit court judges, attorneys, an auditor, a treasurer, sheriffs, coroners and clerks for each of the counties. Crittenden declared Arkansas to be in the second grade of territorial government in October 1819 and held elections the following month for a legislature and delegate to the U.S. Congress. It was not until the following July that Crittenden got around to reporting these actions to Secretary of State John Quincy Adams.

For the next five years, Crittenden remained the dominant political figure in Arkansas politics. Crittenden was an intelligent and forceful leader who developed a personal following among political insiders in the territory. One of them was James Woodson Bates, whose brother was the territorial secretary of Missouri Territory. Bates was elected as delegate to Congress from Arkansas in 1819 and again in 1821. After Crittenden supported Bates in two elections he became disenchanted with him and swung his support to Henry W. Conway in 1823. A first lieutenant in the War of 1812, member of a prominent family in Greene County, Tennessee, and his uncle, William Rector, was the surveyor general of Illinois, Missouri, and Arkansas. Crittenden's fall was connected with his pride. When Governor Miller resigned, Crittenden hoped to be appointed territorial governor, but the outgoing President Monroe chose George Izard, a member of a prominent South Carolina family who had been a major general in the War of 1812.

Piqued at the outcome, Crittenden arranged to be away from Little Rock when Izard arrived. When the governor arrived he was bothered by the secretary's absence and by the way he kept his records. More politically astute than Governor Miller, Izard not only reported Crittenden's shortcomings to Washington but also began to cultivate Delegate Conway and other men of political prominence, such as Ambrose Sevier and Chester Ashley.

During the election of 1827, major political changes took place at Arkansas Territory. Conway ran again, but he was no longer in alliance with Crittenden. Crittenden endorsed Robert C. Oden, a talented but erratic attorney. During the campaign, Oden revealed that Conway had spent six hundred dollars out of seven thousand dollars in U.S. Government money that he had been entrusted to bring to Little Rock; the information had to have come from Secretary Crittenden.

Charges and countercharges, most of them involving Crittenden appeared in the Arkansas Gazette, whose editor, William Woodruff, was publicly impartial but privately a leader of the Conway faction. Conway defended himself by saying that Crittenden had approved his use of the funds and went on to call the secretary a liar in print. Conway won the re-election and Crittenden challenged him to a duel, and the two officeholders exchanged shots on the eastern bank of the Mississippi River at the end of October. Conway's ball damaged Crittenden's clothing, but the secretary's shot entered the delegate's side and broke a rib. The wound was not at first considered mortal, but Conway died less than two weeks later.

A special election was called to fill Conway's position as territorial delegate, which Ambrose Sevier won. Crittenden went into eclipse. Crittenden was reduced to writing his brother in the U.S. Senate, complaining about political defeats and financial reverses and asking that the senator use his influence on his behalf.

Stay tuned to the next edition to see what Robert Crittenden does next!

Alligator Nests Successfully

Continued from page 1

They are expected to winter with the female in a den she has built in the bank. In 1998, young alligators were seen coming out of a den in February in this same area but at that time there was no real tie between the youngsters and the mounds of dirt nearby suspected to be nests. This latest hatching provides a plausible explanation of why babies were sighted in late winter.

Both the nest and the time of hatching seem unusual when compared to alligator populations in other areas of the country. However, researchers have predicted (as mentioned in past newsletter articles) that alligator activity in Arkansas may be different from those in other states since it is at the northern edge of this animal's range. Makeup and location of the nest tends to agree with this since it was built in an area and out of material that have not been traditionally utilized by alligators elsewhere.



al vegetation

Alligator nests are generally mounds of soil and vegetation arranged to allow eggs that are buried within to stay warm and free from predators. This nest has been opened by the mother to allow the babies to hatch and escape more easily.

The successful hatch and the apparent health of the babies indicate that the change in habits may be necessary to meet the environmental conditions. Predation and natural processes will certainly reduce the number of our most recent family, but the growing population of alligators in the state indicates that at least some will survive. During the preparation of this article, a second hatching took place in the park and sixteen new babies were observed in Park Lake. Unfortunately, no camera was deployed in this case since the nest had not been observed prior to its success. The nest appears to have been located on the larger island and the mother, a six-foot specimen, is showing very aggressive tendencies in her role as protector.

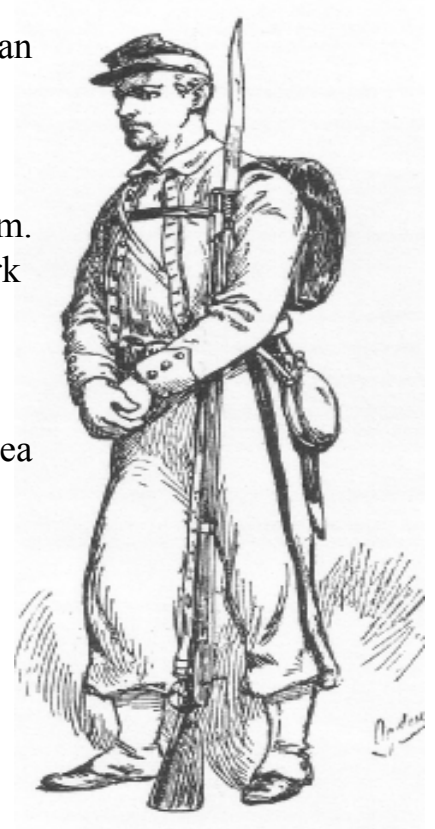
Alligators are not a new focus for Arkansas Post National Memorial, since several articles have appeared in various newspapers throughout the central and southern portions of the state in the last few months concerning them. However, this is the first time that the park has had the good fortune of photographic documentation. Few places in Arkansas provide a better place to study alligators than that afforded by the National Park setting. The Memorial adds easy access for viewing, tranquil scenery, knowledgeable park personnel, and an abundance of alligators at certain times of the year.

While visitors are advised to use caution around any alligators, mothers with babies pose very hazardous situations. People are invited to view the youngsters, but from a distance and with constant vigilance for the adult alligator standing guard. Touching, catching or hunting the babies is not only illegal but also extremely foolish.

February 23 & 24, 2002-----Arkansas Colonial and Early American event. Park Visitor Center.

Arkansas Post Visitor Center is open daily from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. except Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day and New Years Day. Park information, exhibits, park film and educational sales items are available there.

Arkansas Post National Memorial grounds including the picnic area are open from 7:00 a.m. to dusk every day.



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