



Fort Union *PostReturn*

Fort Union Marching to 100 by Ranger Greg Baker



The National Park Service will soon be celebrating its 100 year anniversary as the steward of America's treasured national parks. In preparation for this tremendous accomplishment, Fort Union National Monument has embraced the Call to Action initiative that will ready the National Park Service for its second century, and beyond. The initiative is built around securing the foundation of the mission of the National Park Service and its future by: fostering the connection between people and the extraordinary parks near their homes and communities, advancing the NPS Education Mission by getting the park into the classrooms and the students out in the park, continuing to preserve the special places the public has entrusted to the NPS, and by enhancing professional and organizational excellence for a stronger National Park Service for the future. Fort Union National Monument continues to pursue these goals through a number of ways, including the park's special events and continued outreach efforts.

Fort Union National Monument has already participated in more than a dozen events in our surrounding communities. These events included participation in fairs, local parades, working with schools, educational partners, and working with other units of the National Park Service. This can be seen through our partnership with the Citizens Committee for Historic Preservation in hosting our monthly Glimpses of the Past presentation series in Las Vegas, New Mexico, and also in our continued participation in established community events such as the Fiestas de Las Vegas and the Cleveland Mill Fest. The park has also established new partnerships as opportunities, such as our involvement in a historic dutch-oven cook off at the reemerging Castaneda Hotel. 2015

has brought success in many of our annual events, such as Candlelight Tours and Junior Ranger Camps. They focused on the often forgotten history of the "Indian Wars," and Fort Union's impact on the Southwest and the people who called it home. Fort Union's events not only serve to share the incredible history made here, and create new memories and connections

to the park. In this effort, Fort Union National Monument had the privilege of presenting eleven people their U.S. citizenship. The park hosted its second Naturalization Ceremony with the help of 15 honor students from Springer High School. This event created a very special and memorable connection to the park for these individuals as well as the students who helped make it a success. These are the kinds of connections that will last a lifetime, and will insure a stronger National Park Service as we

step into our second

century of stewardship. It is through our outreach and events that we share these stories, and inspire future generations to support their local National Parks, and discover their own history.

Education Corner



During the 2014-2015 Scholastic year, Fort

Union National Monument reached over 1,000 students, teachers, and parents from the nearby communities by providing numerous school visits and onsite tours. Thanks to Disney Inc. and National Park Foundation's "Ticket to Ride" grant hundreds of thousands of students explore the outdoors. "Ticket to Ride" assists in paying the transportation costs to and from national park sites.

Great News! Starting with the 2015-2016 school year, the "Every Kid in a Park" national program begins. During this time, all 4th grade students and their families will have free admission to any National Park for a full year! More information on this program can be found at :

<http://www.nationalparks.gov/ook/every-kid-in-a-park> (See page 4 for more information).

For more information about the educational opportunities and programs at Fort Union National Monument contact Megan Urban at (505) 425-8025 Ext 221 or by Email at megan_urban@nps.gov.

2016

National Park Service
CENTENNIAL

Nature Watch

by Michelle Gonzalez, NMHU Intern

As you walk through Fort Union, your eyes may be fixed on the historic structures and amazing landscape of the area, however in the short prairie grass there is a well camouflaged resident of the fort. Blending into its surroundings and moving slowly through the ruins is the prairie rattlesnake. It is distinguished by its triangular shaped head, slit shaped eyes, thin neck, blotched pattern markings, and rattle tail.

The prairie rattlesnake is venomous and generally preys on small rodents, other snakes, and birds. They are cold-blooded reptiles and cannot regulate their body temperature internally. This means that on cooler days you may find these rattlers stretched out on the trail trying to warm up, and on hot summer days hiding within the ruins.

During your visit to Fort Union if you happen to encounter one of these native residents we ask that you slowly back away and notify a Park Ranger so that we can safely relocate them. These prairie lands are their home and we wish to keep our natural residents safe as well as our visitors.



Recipes from Fort Union German Baked Apples

- 4 larger apples
- 4 teaspoons brown sugar
- ½ cup water
- Optional: raisins, cinnamon, chopped nuts or dried fruit

Preheat oven to 350F. Wash and core apples, leave ½ inch of apple remaining at the bottom. 1 inch from the top, score the skin of the apple on all sides. Mix brown sugar with any optional ingredients. Using a spoon, fill center of the with the mixture. Place to apples in an oven safe pan with a lip; pour the water into the pan. Bake the apples for 20 minutes or until the tip of the apple rises.



by Ranger Greg Baker

Drill Demonstration Photo Credit: Richard Gonzales

Living History Opportunities at Fort Union

Fort Union National Monument preserves not just remains of a once large army fort and the ruts of the Santa Fe Trail, but also the stories and history found in those walls and across those empty ruts. Without the history and perspective of the lives most impacted by Fort Union, then the standing walls would be just that, walls.

Since the formation of the 3rd Regiment New Mexico Volunteers Living History Unit in 2008, the group is made up of students, veterans, and even descendants of soldiers from the fort. They have helped reestablish Fort Union's once thriving living history program. Today we are giving visitors the opportunity to not just get a glimpse of the past when they visit the park, but to actually set a foot back in time. Imagine visiting the park to be struck by the sight of glinting muskets and the sounds of orders being barked in Spanish, as soldiers march on the parade grounds. Witness by walking into the depot of the fort as it comes to life with the sounds of iron being hammered and shaped, and visiting with a laborer making adobe bricks.

Living history not only creates a bridge for our visitors to experience the past, but also take the visitor directly into the lives and stories that have often been overlooked or forgotten. Stories such as the history of the Hispanic soldiers who fought in the Civil War, or the impact of the Red

River War, on the decimation of the buffalo herds and the loss of land once called home by the Great Plains Tribes.

The 3rd New Mexico Volunteers have been successful, through programs and historical research, in reviving the once critical relationship between Fort Union, the Santa Fe Trail, and the surrounding communities. One such project is the New Mexico Civil War Soldier Heritage Project. It involves gathering, and identifying every record for every soldier of every regiment that served in New Mexico during the Civil War. Then Fort Union staff make those records available to families in the area whose ancestors may have served at the fort.

Over the last few years the living history unit has become a cornerstone of the park's interpretive programming by offering programs and demonstrations to bring the stories to life and vast history found within the fort. The 3rd Regiment New Mexico Volunteers is actively recruiting and wants you! Come and learn about the history of your backyard national park. Share your love of history with our visitors. For more information contact us at (505) 425-8025, Ext. 0



Superintendent's Corner

By: Superintendent Charles Strickfaden

It is my privilege to invite you to help us celebrate the 100th Anniversary of the National Park Service on August 25, 2016. Every one of us has a role in making the Centennial and the future of the Park Service a success. Truly this group effort is how Fort Union National Monument came to be.

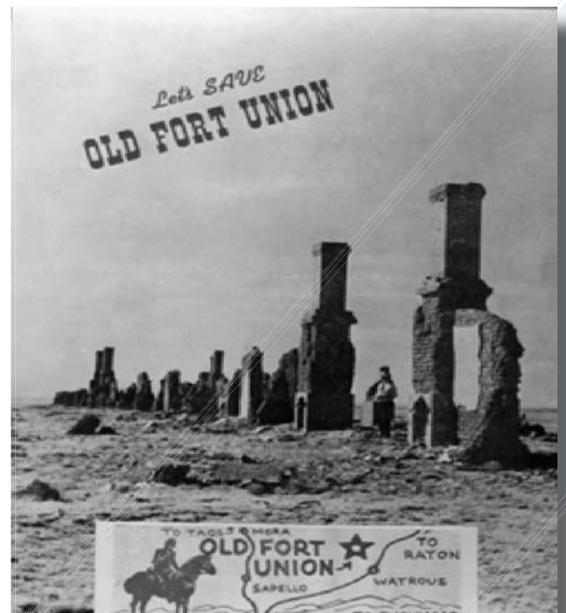
From the 1920s New Mexicans, joined by government officials, campaigned to create a national monument at the site. In 1956 they finally achieved their goal. The establishment of Fort Union National Monument was the result of persistent effort by the citizens of New Mexico. My favorite story of support to this effort involves the Las Vegas public school fundraising efforts. No contribution was too small to be accepted, and each student who contributed received a small card saying, "I helped save Old Fort Union." By the end of 1954 Fort Union supporters had collected almost \$10,000 towards the efforts at creating the new National Monument.

As we venture into our second century of being the steward of America's treasures, the consistent goal of the NPS, in conjunction with our partners, is to "Connect With and Create the NEXT Generation of Park Visitors, Supporters, and Advocates". Though we have many partners working alongside us, I would like

Fort Union Dedication Ceremony

to take a moment to recognize the work done by one of our important partners - The Friends of Fort Union (www.lvcchp.org) are working with us to develop several exciting events this season, including a celebration of Descendants of the Santa Fe Trail during Fort Union Days in June. I am proud and excited for their, and all of our partners efforts, to strive to connect Fort Union through partnerships with our local communities. I also want to remind our visitors that entry to Fort Union NM is FREE.

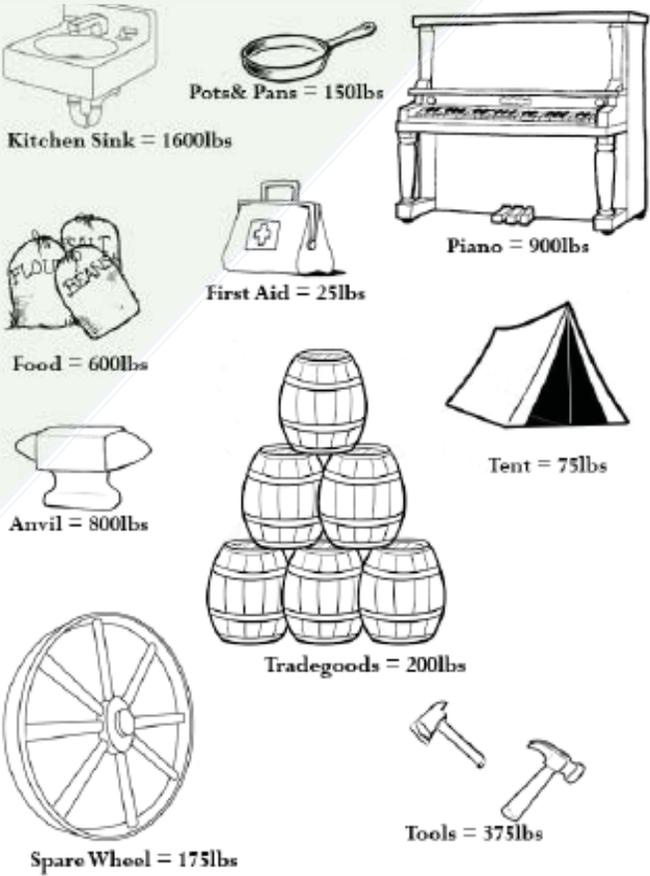
On behalf of all the staff here at Fort Union National Monument, I invite you to celebrate the Centennial with us and challenge you to answer this question... How will you be a part of this wonderful celebration?



Fundraising Pamphlet

Jr. Ranger Round-up

by Ranger Juliana Combs and NMHU Intern Michelle Gonzalez



ITEMS TO TAKE	WEIGHT (LBS)
TOTAL LBS =	

Jr. Ranger Camp 2015

Wagon Wheel Pete lives in Independence, Missouri and he has been reading lots of stories about the Wild West! Pete has read that the West has many dangerous pitfalls and obstacles, but if you can make it down the Santa Fe Trail there is gold beyond belief. Wagon Wheel Pete decides to take his chances and travel out West. With the *Prairie Traveler* instruction book in hand, he buys a wagon and supplies. We need you to help Wagon Wheel Pete load his wagon, but be careful it can only fit 1600 pounds. If you overload your wagon it will break and Pete will never make it West!



Every Kid in a Park! (Continued) by Ariel Mondlak

Starting September 2015, every 4th grade student or the home-schooled age equivalent in the United States, is eligible to receive a free pass to all federal lands and waters as part of the Every Kid in a Park program. It is valid for the 2015-2016 school year. This initiative encourages students of that age to understand the importance of conserving places of historical and cultural significance by providing them the opportunity to visit National Parks and other federal lands and waters free of charge. The pass also permits free entry to other members in their car or up to three adults.



Fort Union National Monument is working to educate local schools about this program and how valuable the opportunity is. In September, rangers visited classrooms in Mora Elementary School to explain the Every Kid in a Park initiative. Students were interested and impressed by the value of the pass and the sense of personal responsibility imbued in it. The students received their passes while visiting Fort Union, during which students learned about the history and importance of Fort Union and the Santa Fe Trail. Fort Union also hosted students from the Rio Gallinas School of Ecology and the Arts, a Las Vegas charter school, for an overnight expeditionary excursion. In addition to the programs of a day visit, students took advantage of the learning opportunities presented by Fort Union's clear night skies. Fort Union is also working to contact other schools and encourage participation in the Every Kid in a Park initiative.

Adobe Structures

By Ranger Juliana Combs

The walls from Fort Union's third fort have been standing for well over 150 years. They have withstood time, wind, rain, sun and whatever else nature could throw at them. They have even managed to last through years of looting and purposeful destruction. When the Park Service received Fort Union in 1954 our job was to allow the old walls to stand.

The preservation crew works hard to ensure that these walls receive the attention and upkeep they need. The walls of Fort Union are the largest collection of colonial-style adobe in the Southwest. Protecting this resource and portion of our past is critical in aiding the understanding of the U.S. today.

Every summer the preservation crew applies two extra layers of adobe by hand to protect the original walls. Sometimes the walls will need more aid than just a protective and sacrificial layer. Many wall issues come about because the adobe is not solid and stationary like brick. Instead of keeping a constituent shape the adobe "breathes".

When it is humid or raining, the adobe absorbs moisture and expands. When the adobe dries again it contracts. This creates a lot of movement in the walls, which creates weak points. The most common signs of wall failure are vertical or horizontal cracks in the adobe protective layer; this normally means the original wall has broken into pieces under the protective layer. When walls start to have a slight 'C' shape to them, called folding; this occurs when the wall is about to fall in on itself due to a weak center point.

The preservation crew uses the rule of thirds; if more than one third of the wall is leaning (generally forming a twist), then the wall is considered unstable. Once one of these issues is spotted, the preservation crew assesses the situation and will decide which kind of bracing to use to reinforce the walls.



Photo Credit: Richard Gonzales

Volunteer Spotlight

by Ranger Greg Baker

Don Bovia

Don Bovia has been a steadfast figure at Fort Union National Monument for over seven years. During his time as a volunteer he has incorporated his love of military history and the Southwest to become the backbone of Fort Union National Monument's living history program. Participating in programs and events at Fort Union, as well as in the local community, made Don one of the park's most recognizable faces.

Don has helped to secure new and expanding partnerships within the community through personal outreach to Masonic groups, other living history units, and local clubs. From his start in 2008 Don's attention to detail and work ethic has been instrumental in building up Fort Union's living history program to where it is today.

Don has also helped in bringing the history of Fort Union National Monument to the national stage as part of the national NPS publication, "Hispanics and the Civil War: From Battlefield to Homefront," in which the group was prominently featured. He participated in programs as far as Pennsylvania to promote the initiative.

Don is a native of Ohio and has called New Mexico home since he retired here with his family in 2000 after 20 years of service in the U.S. Navy. This included service on the USS John F. Kennedy and the USS Iowa. He enjoys being a full time grandfather, serving the community as a member of the Alta Vista Regional Hospital staff, and participating with the Los Zapateados cultural dance group with his family.

Don Bovia volunteers in the 3rd NM Living History Unit, firing muskets and cannons. He shares with park visitors the history of Fort Union. To find out more about volunteer opportunities at Fort Union, contact us at (505) 425-8025 Ext. 0.



Photo Credit: Richard Gonzales



Fort Union National Monument
 P.O. Box 127
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Fort Union PostReturn Newsletter

Fort Union is located off of Interstate 25 near Watrous; exit 366, then proceed west 8 miles on NM-161.

2016 Schedule of Events

Glimpses of the Past

7:00 PM Join Fort Union, Santa Fe Trail Interpretive Center, and the CCHP on the third Thursday of the month (March – October) for presentations that encompass the bountiful natural, cultural, and historical resources of the Southwest. (Located at CCHP 116 Bridge Street, Las Vegas NM.) Contact Fort Union for the complete presentation list.

Junior Ranger Camp June 2 (ages 7-9), June 3 (ages 10-12). 10:00AM –4:00PM

Geared for the youngest of our visitors, the Junior Ranger Camp is an all-day exploration of Fort Union's unique cultural, natural, and military aspects. Each camp is limited to 20 - so please call to make a reservation. Enrollment will be taken beginning April 1, 2016.

Fort Union Days June 18-19

Step back into Fort Union's history in a two-day event filled with guest speakers, living history encampments, cannon and musket firing demonstrations, and guided tours that encompass the diversity of natural, cultural, and military resources of the fort and the surrounding area.

Candlelight Tours August 13

Walk under the stars and back into history, to witness historical based skits which bring to life the stories of Fort Union's past. Each tour is limited to 20 – please call to make a reservation beginning on July 15, 2016. Tour times TBA

Camp of Instruction September 10-11

Witness the training of Company "A" of the 3rd New Mexico Volunteer Infantry, one of many Union Hispanic regiments organized at Fort Union that once defended the New Mexico Territory during the Civil War.

First Fort & Arsenal Tours September 17

Journey back into history to the beginning of Fort Union at the First Fort and Arsenal site on this ranger guided tour. 1st Tour 9:00 AM, 2nd Tour 10:30 AM, 3rd Tour 12:15 PM, Final Tour 2:00 PM

Fort Union National Monument

From 1851-1891, Fort Union was the largest frontier military post and supply center of the Southwest.

Superintendent

Charles Strickfaden

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Park Store www.wnpa.org