

STONES RIVER NATIONAL BATTLEFIELD LIVING HISTORY PROGRAM GUIDELINES

Living history programs can be an effective tool to capture public interest and encourage understanding of the primary interpretive themes of Stones River National Battlefield. Participants in living history programs at Stones River National Battlefield, as volunteers representing the National Park Service (NPS), will present interpretive programs wearing period clothing, and sometimes demonstrating the use of historic weapons and equipment. All programs will have themes, goals, and objectives developed in an Interpretive Service Plan that will help determine the appropriate demonstrations and techniques.

A uniformed Park Ranger will be assigned as the supervisor of the living history activity. In addition, a National Park Service Historic Weapons Firing Supervisor will oversee all activities involving weapons. These two roles may be performed by the same employee.

Safety

The safety of participants and the public is a primary concern for all interpretive programs. The demonstrations of historic weapons and equipment can contribute significantly to visitor understanding and appreciation of the park's resources and themes. Equipment designed for use in warfare, including weapons, present unique hazards that must be mitigated by adhering to all applicable safety standards including a rigorous training regimen and constant awareness of hazardous situations during living history programs.

Interpretive Themes

Living history programs will generally interpret one or more of three time periods:

- October – December 1862 – Occupation of Murfreesboro by the Army of Tennessee
- December 26, 1862 through January 5, 1863 – Campaign and Battle of Stones River
- January 1863 – April 1865 (Focus on Jan. through Jun. 1863) – Union Occupation of Murfreesboro

Historic weapons demonstrations generally focus on the battle and campaign. Interpretation in a military camp interprets one of the periods of occupation unless a campaign style camp with minimal equipment is used to further tell the story of soldier life during military operations.

All formal and informal living history programs will contribute to visitor understanding of one or more of the following themes:

1. The Battle of Stones River was one of the major Civil War battles – in size, complexity and long-term results.

2. The Battle of Stones River profoundly affected the lives of countless people, civilian as well as military, and significantly changed the course of the Civil War by shifting momentum in favor of the Union and providing a timely boost for the Union cause.
3. The preserved cultural resources of Stones River National Battlefield, including its landscapes, historic structures and museum objects, shaped the outcome of the battle and the campaigns that followed and influence the way people remember and commemorate the Battle of Stones River and the Civil War.
4. Stones River National Battlefield and Stones River National Cemetery represent an important early effort in the movement toward battlefield commemoration in the United States.
5. Fortress Rosecrans fulfilled a strategic supply function for the Union army's drive to Chattanooga and Atlanta. It was one of the largest earthwork fortifications built during the Civil War.

A National Park Service employee will develop an Individual Service Plan (ISP) for each interpretive activity. The ISP will contain interpretive themes, program outlines, program schedules, and a bibliography.

The park ranger in charge of interpretation will ensure each individual participant, or the group leader, receives a copy of the ISP at least one week prior to the program date. The ranger will also review the ISP with all participants prior to the first program.

Volunteers In Parks Program

- All participants will be registered as NPS volunteers through either an individual or group agreement.
- Any volunteers under the age of 18 must have a signed parental permission statement.
- Volunteers represent the National Park Service to the public and must conform with all performance standards that apply to employees.
- Our primary mission is to share the unique resources and stories of Stones River National Battlefield with the public. Volunteers are expected to provide the highest level of service to visitors at all times when they are in the park.

Training

All individual park volunteers participating in living history are required to successfully complete the following training:

- Annual instruction in the safe use of 19th Century weapons (artillery, muskets, carbines, repeating weapons, and pistols) as appropriate. Volunteers will be required to pass a practical

evaluation annually and a written examination at least once every four years.

- Training in the safe and proper use of other 19th Century military tools and equipment such as Signal Corps equipment and Artificer tools.
- Online training through the Eppley Institute (<http://www.eppley.org>).
 - Causes of the Civil War
 - Foundations of Interpretation
 - Informal Visitor Contacts

Historic Weapons Demonstrations

- All historic weapons demonstrations will conform to NPS Historic Weapons regulations and the appropriate NPS drill manual(s). All regulations and manuals are available at the park website (<http://www.nps.gov/stri/manuals.htm>)
- All participants in historic weapons demonstrations must be at least 16 years old. Participants in artillery demonstrations must be at least 18 years old to perform positions 1-4 and Gunner.
- Women may participate in historic weapons demonstrations providing they meet all training requirements and make a reasonable effort appear as a male soldier. This includes but is not limited to:
 - Tying up hair underneath a hat which will not be removed in the presence of the public.
 - Wearing clothing of a sufficient size to disguise the volunteer's gender.
- Qualified volunteers representing cultures not documented as participating in the Battle of Stones River may participate in living history programs.
- The leader of volunteer groups will compile and maintain a list of all group weapons that will **include owner's name, make, model, and serial number**. He/she will submit this list to the Historic Weapons Supervisor before the weapons inspection prior to programs beginning.

Other Demonstrations

- Demonstrations utilizing other reproduction tools and equipment of the Civil War will follow written park guidelines and be supported by primary source documentation.
- Careful attention will be paid to safety hazards. Remember weapons are not the only things that can cause injuries.
 - An employee or volunteer will supervise all fires. No visitor should be permitted within five feet of a fire.
 - An employee or volunteer will supervise any displays or demonstrations using sharp

tools.

- Visual or physical barriers may be necessary to keep visitors at a safe distance when demonstrating the use of tools and equipment.

Camp Interpretation

- Effective interpretation relies on articulated themes, goals, and objectives. A National Park Service employee will develop an Individual Service Plan for each interpretive activity. This plan will be prepared by the park for the camp interpretation and will be provided to each volunteer working in the camp.
- The camp is to be an interpretive area where volunteers actively engage visitors in the life of a historic Civil War camp. It is not intended to be a place for volunteers to relax or take breaks from the primary job of interpretation. Breaks and relaxing will take place in a separate area out of view of the public. To this end, the group leader working with the Park Ranger supervising the activities will select a number of volunteer interpreters to perform this vital function. Volunteers and employees in the camp should consider the same standards to apply as apply to employees working at the information desk.
- If the interpretive theme(s) are best supported by a military style tent camp, the group will establish a military camp utilizing historic layouts such as company streets. That camp will serve as an interpretive area when visitors are present in the park. A separate site will be designated for volunteers to use when they are not required to interact with the public.
 - Example: If the interpretive camp is located near the visitor center, the “off stage” site for volunteers to gather and take a break from interaction with the public may be located in the maintenance and housing area on the other side of the Old Nashville Highway.
- If the programs are best served by interpreting a campaign style camp, The group’s tents will be set-up in area not readily visible to the public. The group will still set up the camp according to period military guidelines.
- Volunteers under the age of 14 may not participate in military camp activities. Historians estimate that less than five percent of soldiers were under the age of seventeen. Few documented cases of children younger than fourteen exist.
- The presence of civilians is not permitted in a military camp unless they are filling a documented support role for time period being interpreted in the camp.
- Group members will greet all visitors as they enter the camp area and provide guidance as to the interpretive opportunities within the camp.
- Fires and stacked arms will be supervised by a group member at all times. For all operational periods, a member of the group will be assigned this task. All non-period equipment, clothing, supplies, food, and furniture will not be visible to visitors during park hours (8 AM – 5 or 6 PM) when the public may drive into the parking area.

- All volunteers will comport themselves in manner consistent with the duties and guidelines contained in *The 1865 Customs of Service for Non-commissioned Officers and Soldiers* and *The Customs of Service for Officers of the Army* by August V. Kautz when in the presence of visitors. Both books are in the park's library.
- Activities that group members are encouraged to demonstrate and/or interpret in camp include but are not limited to:
 - Roll Calls
 - Inspections
 - Sick Call
 - Mail Call
 - Guard Mount
 - Reading & Writing Letters
 - Ration Issue and Preparation
 - Equipment and Clothing Maintenance
 - Games
 - Music
 - Fatigue Duties
 - Punishments
 - Other activities that can be documented with primary sources as representative of the daily life of soldiers.
- An excellent source of guidance on the types of activities normally experienced by Civil War soldiers is *Hardtack and Coffee: The Unwritten Story of Army Life* by John D. Billings. This book is housed in the park library and available for purchase in the book store.
- Volunteers are also encouraged to search the letters and diaries contained in the park's Regimental Files (<http://www.nps.gov/stri/historyculture/regfileaids.htm>) as well as other collections to find references directly related to soldier life in and around Murfreesboro.

Civilian Interpretation

Volunteers in civilian clothing may participate in interpretive programs under the following conditions:

- Civilian interpretation will support the interpretive themes the National Park Service establishes for the event. A separate area for civilian interpretation will be established to help visitors transition between military and civilian interpretation. Exceptions to this requirement may be granted if civilians are demonstrating and/or interpreting documented civilian roles in a military camp or interactions between civilians and soldiers.
- Each civilian volunteer will demonstrate lifeway activities that are documented by primary sources as being representative of civilian activities during the Civil War; **AND** demonstrate the ability to connect the general nature of any demonstrations or displays to documented events connected to the Battle of Stones River and/or life in Murfreesboro during the Civil War.

Civilian programs cannot simply be demonstrations of sewing, cooking, washing, and other activities. Demonstrated activities must have a documented connection to interpreted events, and volunteers must be able to effectively use displays and demonstrations to help visitors understand the interpretive themes.

- All volunteers under the age of eighteen may participate in civilian programs provided they meet the requirements above. The presence of children in period costume in an interpretive area can be both a distraction and a safety hazard unless they are directly contributing to the programs.
- All volunteers ages twelve and under must be directly supervised by a parent or guardian.
- Volunteers under the age of eighteen may not participate in interpretive activities in areas that present high safety risks, such as fires, spinning wheels, manufacture of dyes and soap, etc.

Logistics

- All participant vehicles will be parked in the area(s) designated by the National Park Service. Vehicles will not be parked on the grass in the park housing area unless directed by the Park Ranger supervising the activities.
- Group may bring no more than two vehicles into the camp area to load and unload camp equipment.
- Park will provide firewood, a surface fire area, water, and restroom facilities. Volunteers will transport firewood from the bone yard area to the camp.
- The park entrance and maintenance area gates will be false locked in the evenings. Persons leaving and returning to the park will close the gate.

Each individual park volunteer or group leader will be provided a copy of these guidelines and will acknowledge receipt.