



# THE ARKANSAS POST GAZETTE

Volume 6, No. 2 x Spring 2011

## Civil War Sesquicentennial Events Begin in 2011

Although the 150th Anniversary of the Battle of Arkansas Post is not until 2013, the park plans to host programs and events that commemorate the historic period.



Photo by Amanda Robertson, 2010 Digital Photography Contest Winner, First Place—Historical

On May 21, Terry and Margaret Ann Chatfield McCarty from Georgetown, Texas will hold a book signing for *The Chatfield Story: Civil War Letters and Diaries of Private Edward L. Chatfield of the 113th Illinois Volunteers*. The family safeguarded over 116 letters of Private Chatfield for over four decades before addressing the content. Terry served as author and Margaret Ann served as co-author and editor for the project.

The event begins at 10 AM to Noon with the McCartys signing copies of the book, which is currently on sale at the Arkansas Post Visitor Center. At 1 PM, a special program titled “The Adventures of Two Civil War Biographers” will highlight their research and travel when putting the book together. Another open period book signing will be from 2 PM - 3 PM.

During the signing, volunteers in

period clothing will give informal talks in a Civil War Encampment near the park visitor center from 10 AM - Noon and 2 PM - 3 PM. Dyan Bohnert will present the Civil War Medicine Woman.

Park Ranger Joe Herron is planning a similar book-signing in 2012 with an Arkansas writer and historian. The park has also been approached about showing a documentary on Civil War letters. Expect announcements in the near future.

The Sesquicentennial will peak on January 10 -11, 2013 for Arkansas Post. Joe Herron plans a large scale encampment with both sides of the battle and the everyday citizens of Arkansas represented. “We are laying a lot of groundwork for 2013 right now,” says Ranger Herron. “Expect to see a lot of upgrades to outdoor signs, museum exhibits, and Civil War programs in the next couple of years.”

## Save the Date- June 4: Arkansas Post Water Trail Ribbon Cutting Ceremony

A Ribbon Cutting Ceremony for the Arkansas Post Water Trail will be held at 10 AM on June 4 at Moore’s Bayou. The Trail is a multi agency effort by the Arkansas Game and Fish, the United States Army Corps of Engineers, the National Park Service, and Park Volunteer Don Hubsch. After the ribbon is cut, a bayou float will be led by Don Hubsch. With the participation of the Game and Fish, more canoes will be available for visitors to enjoy the water trail. Those wanting to participate in the float should call Joe Herron at 870-548-2207 to reserve a seat. All participants are asked to wear a life jacket. If you cannot bring a life jacket, the park has some to loan out. The water trail launches from Moore’s Bayou to Post Bayou and around to Post Bend Lake. The distance of the guided float will depend on weather.

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Want to see which photo won last year’s contest? Turn to pages 4 - 5



# Fredrick Notrebe

by Joe Herron, Park Ranger



Fredrick Notrebe passed away in New Orleans in 1849, possibly of cholera.

Many people who met or knew Fredrick Notrebe left observations about him: Albert Pike, George Featherstonehaugh, and Governor John Pope. It is widely believed that Washington Irving based a character, The Grand Seigneur, on Notrebe in his short story *The Creole Village*. "...he was worth a full fifty thousand dollars, an amount almost equal, in the imagination of the villagers, to the treasures of King Solomon."

Sources:

-Arnold, Morris. *Unequal Laws Unto A Savage Race*. Fayetteville: University of Arkansas Press, 1985.

-Hodges, Dr., and Mrs. T. L. Hodges. "Jean Lafitte and Major L. Latour in Arkansas Territory." *Arkansas Historical Quarterly* 7 (Winter 1948): 237-256.

-Johnson, Boyd. "Frederick Notrebe." *Arkansas Historical Quarterly* 21 (Autumn 1962): 269-283.

-Neider, Charles. *The Complete Tales of Washington Irving*. First De Capo Press, 1975.

-Encyclopedia of Arkansas History and Culture <http://www.encyclopediaofarkansas.net/>. Articles by Kathleen H. Cande and Samuel Pyeatt Menefee

While touring the Arkansas Post Townsite, one name stands out: Colonel Fredrick Notrebe. A sign marks the location of his cotton gin and press. Another sign explains that his residence, store, and warehouse stood near the large cistern. The 24 foot deep cistern is the most visible remnant of the old village today. Notrebe's Bend further down the river is also named for the Colonel. There are many questions about this historic figure and where he came from.

He was born in 1780 in France. He either served in the French Army during the Consulate (1799 – 1804) or under Marshal Bon-Adrien Jeannot de Moncey. He may have fought in Spain during the Peninsular War. He immigrated to the United States around 1810 and married seventeen-year-old Mary Felicite Billette (Bellette) in 1811. The title Colonel is not believed to be from his time in the French Army, but as a title of respect from his involvement with the Missouri militia prior to 1819.

He remained at Arkansas Post at a time when many of the French were relocating near Pine Bluff. Many French in this period were not too pleased when Arkansas became a territory in 1819. A spy using the pseudonym Captain Hillare spent time

with Fredrick Notrebe in 1816 at Arkansas Post while collecting information on travelers and trappers. He reported that local Creoles "knew the Americans and cordially hated them". "Captain Hillare" was more famously known as Jean Laffite.

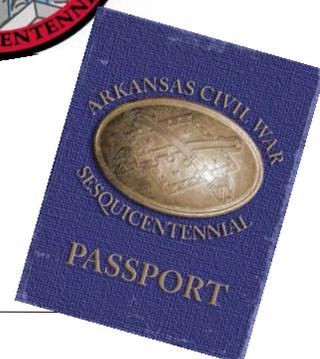
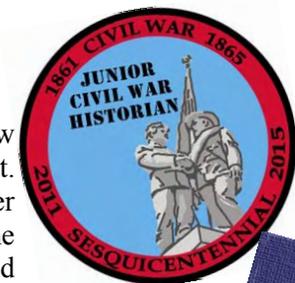
Notrebe worked a fur trading house at Arkansas Post. He largely traded with Indians in the area. As he gained more wealth he began to buy land including a plantation three miles south of the Arkansas Post. As a cotton producer, he experimented with foreign strains of cotton to produce a superior product. He created a cotton gin that was less likely to have friction-caused fires. His advances and shrewd business practices helped him gain a near monopoly in cotton in Southeast Arkansas.

When so many people abandoned the Post for Little Rock when the capital moved, Notrebe stayed. He had the foresight to invest in cotton when the fur trade waned. His investment in Arkansas Post is likely what kept the village afloat through the 1830's. Notrebe has a major force behind a branch of the Arkansas State Bank being constructed at the Post. He also helped found and name the town of Napoleon. He had a grandson also named after his former military leader.

## Civil War Programs in the Park

Arkansas Post National Memorial and Pea Ridge National Military Park are now participating in a Junior Civil War Historian program started in the Southeast. Junior Rangers can earn a commemorative patch by either completing Junior Ranger programs at three participating parks, or two parks and an online activity. Begin at the visitor center or visit the "for kids" section at the Stone's River National Battlefield website: [www.nps.gov/stri](http://www.nps.gov/stri). Twelve National Park Sites are currently participating.

Another exciting program is the Arkansas Civil War Sesquicentennial Passport. This was created by the Arkansas Civil War Sesquicentennial Commission to promote sites relevant to the War in Arkansas. Arkansas Post is one of 23 stamping stations. Once a postcard in the book has been completed and mailed in, visitors can receive a commemorative coin or patch. Learn more at [www.arkansascivilwar150.com](http://www.arkansascivilwar150.com).



# Local Youth Battle Invasive Exotic Plants

by Kirby McCallie STEP Biological Technician and YCC Leader



YCC Students removing invasive exotic plants - NPS Photo by Kirby Macallie

**I**nvasive exotic plants are spreading within our National Parks at alarming rates. These non-native plants take over the forest floor and edge making it hard to view wildlife or enjoy a hike through the woods. An invasive exotic plant is not native to the area and is likely to take over and crowd out native plants. They are a problem because they change the natural landscape, use up water and nutrients, and some are even harmful to humans. Imagine you are walking through the woods and stumble upon an impenetrable wall of thorny plants. What would you do? The first thought would be to turn around, but what an inconvenience. This could turn your leisurely stroll into a troublesome nightmare.

Visitors come from all over to enjoy our beautiful parks and natural areas with the expectation of having an enjoyable experience. To provide this experience and reach our mission of preserving the park for future generations, the National Park Service created Exotic Plant Management Teams (EPMT) to help control these plants. The EPMT

helps the park set management priorities and provides resources to hire technicians to lead the plant reduction efforts.

In addition to a Biological Technician leading the effort, Arkansas Post employed twelve Youth Conservation Corps (YCC) students in 2010 to aid in the removal of invasive exotic plants. The YCC students battled extreme heat, ticks, chiggers, and two-inch thorns this summer.

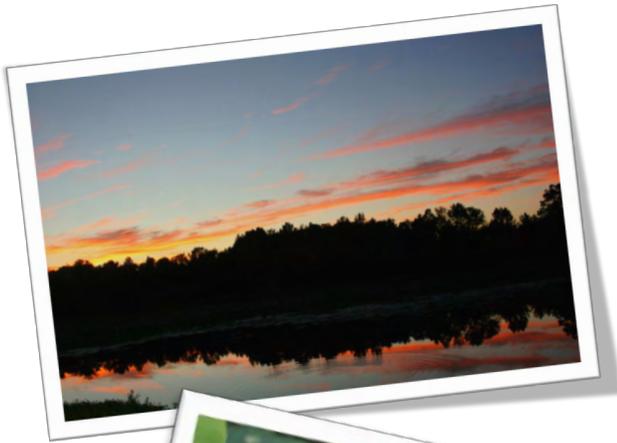
The students learned valuable job skills, plant identification skills, and the responsibilities of maintaining a National Park. They worked 40 hours per week for eight weeks cutting, dragging, and hauling the plants out of the woods. They cleared over one acre of invasive exotic plants, exceeding the park's goal for the summer. Because of the students' hard work and dedication, visitors can enjoy seeing wildlife and hiking without encountering as many invasive exotic plants. There are still many acres of exotic plants to remove at Arkansas Post and other National Parks. But through hard work and perseverance, a lot can be accomplished.

Arkansas post expects to hire more YCC students next summer to take part in exotic plant removal. Volunteers are also encouraged to take part in the beautification of our National Parks. If you are interested in learning more about invasive exotic plants, EPMTs, or the YCC program, or would like to volunteer at the park, contact Park Biologist Sarah Allely at 870-548-2210.



YCC Students - Kay Best, Trinika Logan, Carly McSwain, Kassie Ray, Josh Connelly, Trevor Lowe  
NPS Photo by Kirby Macallie

# 2010 Digital Photography Contest Winners

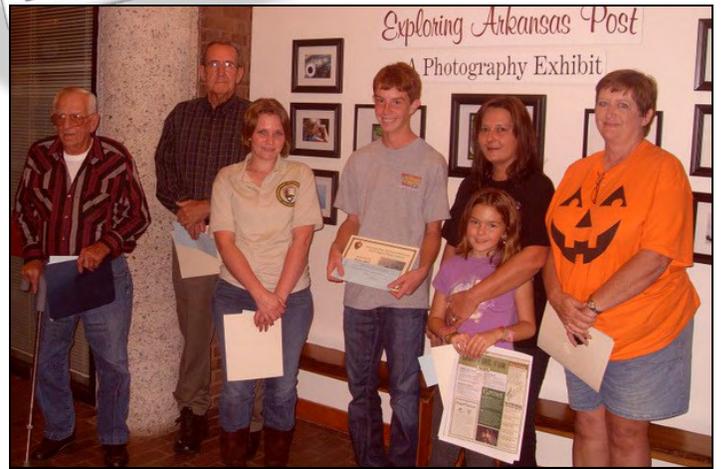


The 2011  
Digital Photography  
Contest is open  
through Labor Day



## Adult Division

(Left to Right from Top) First Place Landscape Tie - Tammy DeBerry (DeWitt), First Place Landscape Tie - Evelyn Jeffers (Hampton), First Place Wildlife and Grand Prize Winner - James "Doc" George (Pine Bluff), First Place Macro - Tammy DeBerry, First Place Recreation - Charlotte Purdy (DeWitt), First Place Plantlife - Jimmy Wylie - Star City, Front cover photo - First Place Historical - Amanda Robertson (Dumas)



2010 Contest Winners - Jimmy Wylie, James "Doc" George, Amanda Robertson, Jeremy Smith, Charlotte Purdy, Ashlynn Jenkins (front), and Tammy DeBerry NPS Photo by Joe Herron

#### Youth Division

(Left to Right from Top) First Place Wildlife - Ashlynn Jenkins (DeWitt), First Place Macro - Jeremy Smith (Dumas), First Place Plantlife—Jeremy Smith, First Place Historical - Jeremy Smith, First Place Landscape - Mary Claire Grantham (Tichnor), Back Cover Photo - First Place Recreation - Mary Claire Grantham

# Program Recap: Fall 2010 - Spring 2011

High winds and rain cancelled the Fall Bayou Float in November. The next week Sarah Allely gave a bird talk and hike to the Eagle Nest. The breeding pair of Eagles were visible that day.

The Open House in December brought several visitors to the park for the special 50 year Anniversary slideshow.

In January, the park film, *Echoes of the Past*, received an upgrade. Visitors with hearing impairments can request devices that boost the sound either with an earphone or a T-switch in certain hearing aids. The park also has an option for visually impaired visitors to enjoy the film with an audio

description using the same portable device.

In January, the park placed the Recycling Trailer at the Visitor Center. The response from the community has been very positive. Sarah Allely and Joe Herron took the trailer to the Gillett 4H for a special recycling program. Joe Herron and Maria Jackson (Arkansas Post Museum State Park) visited Park Avenue Elementary School in Stuttgart to help teachers with required Arkansas History hours.

Members of the Early Arkansas Reenactors (EARA) returned for the annual Colonial Encampment. Park Volunteer Don Hubsch and

EARA members Ed Williams, Chuck Martin, and Earl Harrell all took part.

The Spring Bayou Float had better weather. Don Hubsch and Joe Herron took visitors to view the Eagle Nest at Post Bayou and then further down Moore's Bayou.

The Spanish Artillery Crew fired the cannon and held a moment of silence in commemoration of Colbert's Raid. Park Volunteers Dyan Bohnert and Don Hubsch helped tell the story of Arkansas' Spanish era.

The Digital Photography Contest launched during National Park Week. A Photo Release and Entry Form with all of the contest rules is available at the park visitor center or by visiting the Photos and Multimedia section of the park website - [www.nps.gov/arpo](http://www.nps.gov/arpo).

The Grand Prairie Historical Society held their spring meeting and picnic at the park in April. Rachel Silva from the Arkansas Historic Preservation Program spoke.

National Park Week closed with Gillett Girl Scouts taking part in a bird watching hike. After visiting the Eagle Nest, the scouts returned to the Visitor Center to dissect owl pellets.



Firing Muskets - (Front to back) Chuck Martin, Don Hubsch, and Earl Harrell demonstrate flintlock musket fire (Photo by Melissa Grantham)

## New Bookstore Items Highlight the Civil War

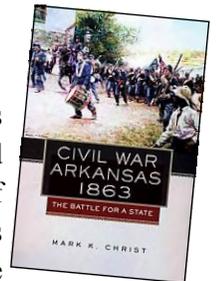
Eastern National produced *The Civil War Remembered*, which is recognized as the official National Park Service Handbook of Civil War sites. It contains 173 pages of period art, photographs, a timeline, and list of Civil War sites in the National Park Service. The bookstore sells this paperback for \$10.95.

A smaller National Park Service produced publication, *Slavery: Cause and Catalyst of the Civil War*, sells for \$3.95. This illustrated book explores slavery as the central cause of the war.

The bookstore has five copies of Mark K. Christ's book, *Civil War Arkansas 1863: The Battle for a State*. This hardcover sells for \$34.95. Joe Herron

says the book contains a "well researched and thorough description of the Battle of Arkansas Post." This book is the Ranger's pick for 2011.

The Civil War 150 Year Commemorative coffee mug is also available for \$7.95.



# Calendar of Events 2011

**May 21—Civil War Encampment / *The Chatfield Story* Book-signing** - A Civil War Encampment will be from 10 AM - 1 PM and 2 PM - 3 PM. The book-signing will be from 10 AM - Noon. A formal program will be from 1 PM to 2 PM with another signing period from 2 PM - 3 PM. See page one for more details.

**June 4 -Special Ribbon Cutting for the Arkansas Post Water Trail** will be at 10 AM at Moore's Bayou. The new trail is collaboration between the Arkansas Game and Fish, US Army Corp of Engineers, National Park Service, and Park Volunteer Don Hubsch. A short guided float will follow the ceremony.

**FAMILY FUN DAYS - SATURDAYS THIS SUMMER – 9 AM to 1 PM**  
*Register for these events (except the Fishing Derby) by calling 870-548-2207*

**June 11 – Reptiles and Amphibians –** Learn about the slippery and scaly inhabitants of Arkansas Post. Special programs on snakes, turtles, and alligators and a hike around Park Lake are just part of the fun.

**June 18 - Youth Fishing Derby** – Try your hand at catching the big one in the Arkansas Post Youth Fishing Derby. Park Lake will be stocked by the Arkansas Game & Fish Commission with 300 channel catfish for this event. Prizes will be awarded for the largest catfish landed. Competition is open to youth 12 and under. Registration begins at 8:30 A.M. Competition fishing from 9:00 A.M. to Noon. Fishing will be open to all ages after the contest.

**June 25 – Birds and Mammals -** The first Europeans to settle Arkansas sought after the furs of small mammals

and deer. Today, Arkansas Post draws birders from across the region. Join us for a bird hike and talks on animal tracks.

**July 2 – Colonial Kids Day** – What kind of chores and games would a kid have taken part in during 1700s Arkansas? Join Rangers and Volunteers to learn about the early days of Arkansas History.

**July 9 – Digital Photography Workshop** – Participants learn basic techniques for taking outdoor digital photographs and capture nature in action at Arkansas Post. You can also create a frame for their picture and at the end of the day to receive a copy of their best photograph to take home. You may bring your own digital camera or you can reserve one of the parks digital cameras when you call to register.

**July 16 – Orienteering / Bike Tours** – If you want to learn how to read a map and compass, this program is will help with the basic skills. Bring your bicycle and helmet for a special tour of Arkansas Post.

**July 23 – Civil War in the Delta** – Ranger Joe Herron will lead a walk to the rifle pits for a special talk on the Battle of Arkansas Post. We will briefly discuss battles of Helena, St. Charles, and Ditch Bayou and what role these Delta battles played in the overall Western Campaign. This program is geared for kids, but everyone with an interest in the Civil War

is encouraged to attend.

**July 30 – Digital Photography Workshop** – An encore program for those who missed the July 9 workshop.

**June 16 - Early Arkansas History at Arkansas Post Educator Workshop** 9 AM - 2 PM - An educator workshop highlighting the exploration, settlement, and territorial history of Arkansas. The day will also include a hike to the old Townsite and Civil War rifle pits. Arkansas educators will receive six hours of professional development including two hours of Arkansas History. Please bring a sack lunch and comfortable shoes.

**Tuesdays and Thursdays, June 21 – July 28 -Trailblazers:** Join Teacher Ranger Lindsay Robinson Beaton at 8 AM for a special “couch-potato to 5K” running program. Time completing the program can go towards earning the Presidential Active Lifestyle Award. Registration is necessary; call Joe Herron or Lindsay Robinson Beaton at 870-548-2207.

**October 22 - The 17th Annual Ghosts of the Past** - Join park staff and volunteers for the annual guided walk through Arkansas History. Living History demonstrations will portray events from the exploration and settlement of Arkansas Post, Colbert's Raid, and the Civil War. Tours last approximately one hour; Reservations are strongly recommended.



#### One More Photography Contest Winner

2010 Youth Winner: First Place Recreation and First Place Landscape Mary Claire Grantham (right) with Superintendent Ed Wood and her sister Chloe before The 16th Ghosts of the Past event (Photo by Melissa Grantham)



National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior

Arkansas Post National Memorial  
1741 Old Post Road  
Gillett, AR 72055

EXPERIENCE YOUR AMERICA™

Arkansas Post National Memorial commemorates the earliest European settlement in the Lower Mississippi valley. First established in 1686, the Post was an important staging point for Mississippi River trade between New France and the Gulf of Mexico. Situated along the Arkansas River, the small settlement here blossomed into the first capital of the Arkansas Territory. It was the site of a small Revolutionary War skirmish as well as two-day Civil War Battle.

**Arkansas Post National Memorial**  
1741 Old Post Road  
Gillett, AR 72055

**Phone**  
870 548-2207

**E-mail**  
[arpo\\_historian@nps.gov](mailto:arpo_historian@nps.gov)

**Internet**  
[www.nps.gov/arpo](http://www.nps.gov/arpo)

**Visitor Center Hours**  
Daily 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

**Grounds and Picnic Area Hours**  
Daily 8:00 a.m. to dusk



Photo by Mary-Claire Grantham, 2010 Digital Photography Contest Winner, First Place Recreation (Youth)

## Next Issue - Summer 2011

Featuring articles on:

- 325 Years of Arkansas Post
  - Counting White Tailed Deer
  - Union Navy at Arkansas Post  
*(New series spotlighting ships involved with the 1863 battle)*
  - Superintendent's Scribblings
- And More

## Greener Gazette

If you would prefer to receive an e-mail update when the newsletter is posted to the park website, please e-mail Joe Herron at [arpo\\_historian@nps.gov](mailto:arpo_historian@nps.gov)