

MAY 2012

Post Rider

Newsletter of the
Natchez Trace Parkway Association

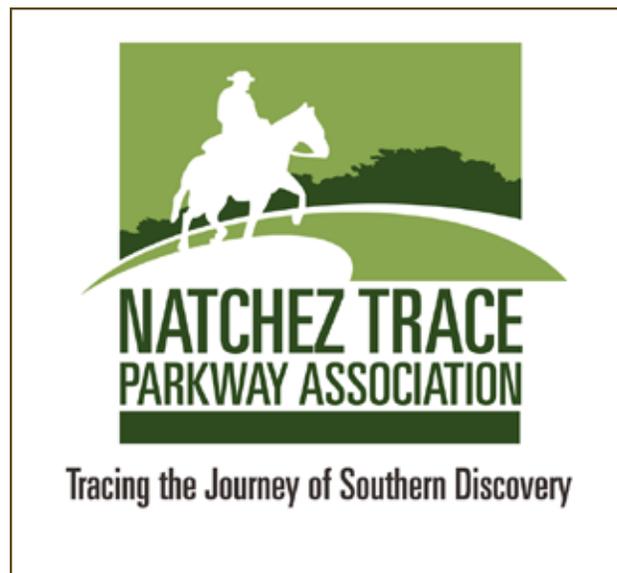
EXPLORE•COMPLETE•SUPPORT•PROTECT

New partnerships and new discoveries

Excitement is building along the parkway in just about every area. The decision of the Chickasaw Nation and the National Park Service to begin work on the Chickasaw Heritage Center at Chickasaw Village is a major development, and it will have a profound impact on transforming the parkway into more of a park experience. Enthusiastic chapter meetings kicked off the development of chapters in Alabama and in mid-Mississippi. Our 75th anniversary photo history book is ready to go on sale. And the first War of 1812 bicentennial event on May 26 and 27, a major living history event, is attracting participants from around the country.

The beginning of the commemoration of the bicentennial years of the War of 1812 fulfills one of the century-old goals of early parkway promoters. "We are in danger of losing all signs of our once-famous military highway," Mississippi State DAR regent Elizabeth Jones said in 1907, as she set in motion events leading to creation of the Natchez Trace Parkway and this first event Muster Day on the Natchez Trace – Prelude to the War of 1812. People from across the country will return to the old Natchez Trace to honor its role in American history. Among many stories the Natchez Trace Parkway preserves, the role of the Natchez Trace and its people in the War of 1812 is one the most important to the nation.

The Association lends its support as a partner to the National Park Service and the 7th United States Infantry Living History Association for a multi-year program to tell the story of the Natchez Trace during the war. The 7th U.S. Infantry Living History Association brings



the highest quality interpretation. Many of its re-enactors are scholars, educators, active military personnel and curators. They have been recognized for their commitment to historical accuracy. The first event is also sponsored by the Tennessee War of 1812 Bicentennial Commission as one of its official events.

Muster Day takes place at a time when the Natchez Trace Parkway has developed a new emphasis on interpretation. It also begins a new initiative on living history in a big way at points along the Trace, as one of several new developments. Living history is one of the most effective ways to instill an interest in history in young people and it is an important way the parkway can become a greater resource for its communities.

We also welcome new partnerships with the Daughters of the American Revolution and the Daughters of the War of 1812. On June 16, the Daughters of the War of 1812 plan to dedicate a bicentennial monument to the War of 1812 soldiers who are buried along the old Natchez Trace. Other markers are being discussed for sites off the parkway along the old Trace.

Natchez Trace communities and visitors from around the world are discovering that whether their interest is nature, recreation, history or education the Natchez Trace Parkway is an important resource to enrich their lives. The Association provides an opportunity to support the National Park Service in that work and to be part of all the exciting developments. Association chapters are being formed to reconnect communities to the parkway. You will find a membership application in the newsletter. If you have not already become a member, please join us to become part of the next chapter of Natchez Trace history.

~ Tony Turnbow, Association President

Work begins on design of Chickasaw Heritage Center

Superintendent Cameron Sholly announced at the mid-Mississippi Chapter meeting the Chickasaw Heritage Center project is moving forward. The superintendent met with Chickasaw Nation officials in Oklahoma last month.



Sholly

“Our partnership with the Natchez Trace Parkway is part of our overarching commitment to expand the scope of knowledge of Chickasaw history, heritage and culture. Chickasaws will always have a strong emotional connection with the homelands. That is

why it is so important to develop a tangible reminder of the history of the Chickasaw people in this area,” Chickasaw Nation Governor Bill Anoatubby was quoted as stating in a May 16, 2012 report by *The Republic*. The Chickasaw Nation recently opened a multi-million

dollar cultural center in Sulphur, Oklahoma. The Oklahoma center will serve as a model for the facility on the parkway on a smaller scale.

The heritage center will be built at the Chickasaw Village site, just south of the Parkway Visitor Center. Tentative plans include both indoor and outdoor exhibits, including re-creations of Chickasaw structures. Restroom facilities and additional parking will be added.

When the Natchez Trace military road was built in the early 1800s through a treaty with the Chickasaw and Choctaw nations, the Chickasaw Nation was centered near the Tupelo area. The nation extended to about sixty miles south of present-day Tupelo and its hunting grounds included what is now Middle and West Tennessee. Memphis, once known as Chickasaw Bluffs, served as a major trading village. In addition to the old Chickasaw Trace, Colbert Ferry, Gordon Ferry, Buzzard Roost and McLish Stand are just four sites on the parkway are also directly connected to Chickasaw history. The Chickasaw Nation supplied crucial rations and forage to U.S. troops during the War of 1812, and many of its leaders volunteered to serve with U.S. forces in the defense against the British.

Superintendent Sholly said that planning is expected to take about two years. The National Park Service has designated a planner, and funds for the National

Park Service portion of the design work were appropriated several years ago. Fundraising plans for the facility will be discussed during the planning process.

The development of the heritage center marks a major step forward in the completion of the interpretation and visitor amenities needed for the parkway.



Photo Tony Turnbow

Fatty Bread Branch. According to local legend, the Chickasaw would walk travel from as far as Muscle Shoals for Dolly Gordon's fatty bread, likely a type of corn bread, and the branch was given that name.

Grant for Walking Trails



Photo Tony Turnbow

The Natchez Trace Parkway has received a grant for \$100,000 to improve six miles of walking trails along the parkway in Tupelo. Superintendent Sholly said grant funds will be used for widening some of the trails, clearing underbrush and adding new foot bridges and signs. The improved trails will continue to be used for hiking. The addition of a bike trail system, similar to the trails at Ridgeland, is still in the exploration stage.

The Association has become a member of the Partnership for National Trails Systems (PNTS). At the PNTS winter meeting in Washington, D.C. in February, the Association participated in planning for long-range support for National Scenic Trails. The Natchez Trace Parkway has 65 miles of designated National Scenic Trails. The Parkway is erecting new signs to make visitors better aware of their locations. The Association has issued an invitation for the PNTS to hold its annual meeting on the parkway in 2015.

www.NatchezTrace.info/recreation

Work is continuing on development of the web site. Your suggestions are needed to provide the information needed for recreation. Please consider the following categories and make suggestions for additional categories or specific information you would like to see:

- Maps
- Trails
- Elevations and Terrain
- Links to Services-
- Food
- Lodging
- Gear
- Pick up and delivery
- Points of Interest
- History
- Nature
- Rides and Events
- Cycle Clubs



Muster Day on the Natchez Trace



Photo by Jed Dekalb, Tennessee Dept. of Tourism

The Lewis and Clark Fife and Drum Corps of St. Charles, Missouri will perform as part of the Muster Day on the Natchez Trace events at the Gordon House on Saturday and Sunday, May 26 and 27. Members of the corps range in age from 8 to 18, just as in 1812.

The rare chance to experience an early Natchez Trace muster day will occur during Muster Day on the Natchez Trace-Prelude to the War of 1812.

Muster days were once common

in towns near the Trace. Men met in the morning to drill, and the day normally ended in a festival atmosphere as women brought pies and cakes. Men settled old scores in shooting matches, wrestling match-

es and fights. (The later customs will not be recreated.)

The atmosphere of the period will be recreated also by non-military impressionists. An anti-British play from 1812 will be performed in a tavern-style tent to reflect the growing sentiment against the empire stemming from impressment of U.S. sailors on the high seas. Sutlers will sell period wares. People portraying John and Dolly Gordon will also interpret the lifestyle of the Gordon Ferry.

During the course of the day, as in May 1812, a Natchez Trace post rider will bring news of a council among the Indians and the Martha Crawley incident, a kidnapping of a settler that added to war fever. A political debate will ensue among the politicians of the day as to whether the country should go to war and a Chickasaw Chief George Colbert impressionist will repeat the speech the chief gave to Tennessee settlers in May 1812 to assure the friendship of the Chickasaw Nation. On Sunday morning, a spring 1812 Duck River camp meeting will be recreated to reflect the influence of the second Great Awakening, an important part of Natchez Trace history. A brief ceremony honoring John Gordon will conclude the event on Sunday at 1 p.m.

There will also be an opportunity to delve deep into the history of the causes of the war. Noted regional historians Tom Kanon, Clay Williams, Mike Bunn and Jim Park will speak on Saturday.

The Lewis and Clark Fife and Drum Corps, from St. Charles, Missouri will add to the festive and patriotic atmosphere throughout the event, joining the fife and drum corps from the 7th U.S. Living History Association. They will perform a concert midday on Saturday.

Daughters of War of 1812 to place monument in June

A bicentennial monument honoring War of 1812 soldiers buried along the Natchez Trace will be dedicated June 16, 2012 by the Tennessee Society of the Daughters of the War of 1812. The 11 a.m. ceremony will take place on the Natchez Trace Parkway at mile marker 426.3 near Leiper's Fork. The ceremony will also be an official Tennessee War of 1812 Bicentennial Commission event. June 18, 2012 marks 200

years from the declaration of the second American war against the British.

Tennessee became known as the "Volunteer State" during the War of 1812 when over 2,000 volunteers answered the call for troops. Volunteer cavalry militia marched down the Natchez Trace in brutal winter conditions in January, 1813 to help defend the Gulf Coast area against a threatened British attack. All 2,000 troops returned home in April, 2013, led by General Andrew Jackson. On the return march, Jackson walked with his infantry all but 20 miles back to Tennessee. Food was in short supply and disease spread rapidly. Soldiers who died on the marches are buried along the old Natchez Trace in graves that are now unmarked.

In 1814, detachments of soldiers again marched on the Trace to engage the British in the Battle of New Orleans. Over 5,000 Tennessee, Kentucky and Mississippi Territory soldiers returned victorious from the 1815 battle. Jackson returned on the Trace in a carriage accompanied by his wife and his son.

The War of 1812 has often been called "the forgotten war." The Daughters of the War of 1812 hope the monument will provide a permanent reminder of the soldiers who fought the war to establish American independence.

MUSTER DAY SCHEDULE

SATURDAY, MAY 26

- 9:00 Site and parking open
- 10:00 Opening Ceremony
- 11:30 Special Lecture by Jim Parker. "Borderland Background: An Overview of Emotions and Conditions Along the Gulf Borderlands."
- 12:30 Special Lecture by Clay Williams and Mike Bunn. "The Smoldering Tinderbox: Prelude to the Creek War and the War of 1812"
- 1:30 Special Lecture by Dr. Tom Kanon. "Indian/Settler Tensions on the Tennessee Frontier: The Martha Crawley Incident of 1812"
- 3:00 Historical Political Debates and Re-enactments
- 4:00 Mustering of the Troops



Photo Becky Jane Newbold

SUNDAY, MAY 27

- 10:30 Camp Meeting (period church service)
- 11:15 Lunch on the Lawn
- 1:00 Closing Ceremony



Photo Becky Jane Newbold

Officers and Directors for 2012

President: Tony Turnbow, Tennessee

First Vice-President: Dr. Bryant Boswell,
Mississippi

Second Vice-President: Judy Sizemore, Alabama

Third Vice-President: Dr. Eslick Daniel,
Tennessee

Directors:

ALABAMA

L.O. Bishop
Susann Hamlin
Joy Pace Isom
Judy Sizemore

Tonya Threet

Dot Ward

Lester Senter Wilson

TENNESSEE

April Cantrell

Nancy Conway

Dr. Bridgett Jones

Dr. Eslick Daniel

Autry Gobbell

Judy Hayes

Tom Morales

MISSISSIPPI

Dr. Bryant Boswell

Mark Burleson

Gary Carnathan

Emma Crisler

Dr. Elbert Hilliard

David Rumbarger

Alabama organizes chapter

BY GOODLOE "BUD" PRIDE,
CHAPTER CHAIRMAN

The new NTPA Colbert & Lauderdale County, Alabama Chapter held its first meeting in early March at the Sheffield Public Library. The meeting resulted in a general discussion of the plan to solicit chapter memberships in our two counties. Additionally, a date was set for the current chapter members to tour that portion of the Trace in Alabama, to observe existing points of interest and consider additional attractions in the Alabama Parkway Corridor. That tour was made on Thursday, March 15, 2012 and a number



Courtesy Photo

Newly elected NTPA Alabama Chapter officers include, back, left, Carole Driskell, secretary, Verna Brennen, vice-president, and Curtis Flowers, program chair. Front, left, Goodloe "Bud" Pride, chapter president and Tony Turnbow, president of the Natchez Trace Parkway Association.

of ideas were discussed. Observations were also made as to the amount of available space adjacent to the Tennessee River in the Trace's Colbert Park for a possible Shoals area Riverside Fall event.



Be sure to "Like"
the Association's
FACEBOOK page

It is a great place to share photos, history and a link to our website with your friends

Ask how you can be a part of the continuing
development of our website

www.NatchezTrace.info



Mid-Mississippi begins organization

By DOT WARD,
CHAPTER SECRETARY

The organizational meeting of the Mid-Mississippi Chapter of the Natchez Trace Parkway Association (NTPA) was held at the Craft Center in Ridgeland with approximately 100 people in attendance.

Following a reception, Natchez Trace Parkway Superintendent Cam Sholly spoke enthusiastically of the many projects now underway on the Parkway. In addition to reporting that the Chickasaw Heritage Center at the Chickasaw Village site in Tupelo is moving forward, he emphasized the need for partnerships between the National Park Service and organizations to help make the most of the parkway.

NTPA President Tony Turnbow outlined future plans for developing historic sites along the Parkway and the Association's plan to help the National Park Service fund projects for interpretive centers for educational pursuits and visitor enjoyment through the Natchez Trace Parkway Foundation.

Dr. Bryant Boswell challenged the group to catch



Photo Tony Turnbow

the vision of what the Mid-MS Chapter can accomplish in providing educational benefits to the students in the Metro area with visits to historic sites such as Brashear's Stand and the Choctaw Agency on the Trace once they are developed. He also outlined the many activities planned on the Trace during the next three years with events to commemorate the Bicentennial of the War of 1812.

Dr. Boswell will serve as chapter chair and Dot Ward will serve as secretary. Other chapter officers and committee chairs will be selected to represent the seven primary communities in the mid-Mississippi area along the Parkway.

Upcoming Meetings & Events

- **May 26-27** - Muster Day on the Natchez Trace- Prelude to the War of 1812, Gordon House
- **June 4** - *Building the Natchez Trace Parkway* goes on sale
- **September 8** - Alabama Chapter Meeting and Oka Kapassa Festival, Tuscumbia
- **October 6-7** - Benton Town 1812, Leiper's Fork
- **October 27-28** - Annual Meeting and 75th Anniversary of the Natchez Trace Parkway Association Commemoration at Brandon Hall, Natchez, Mississippi.

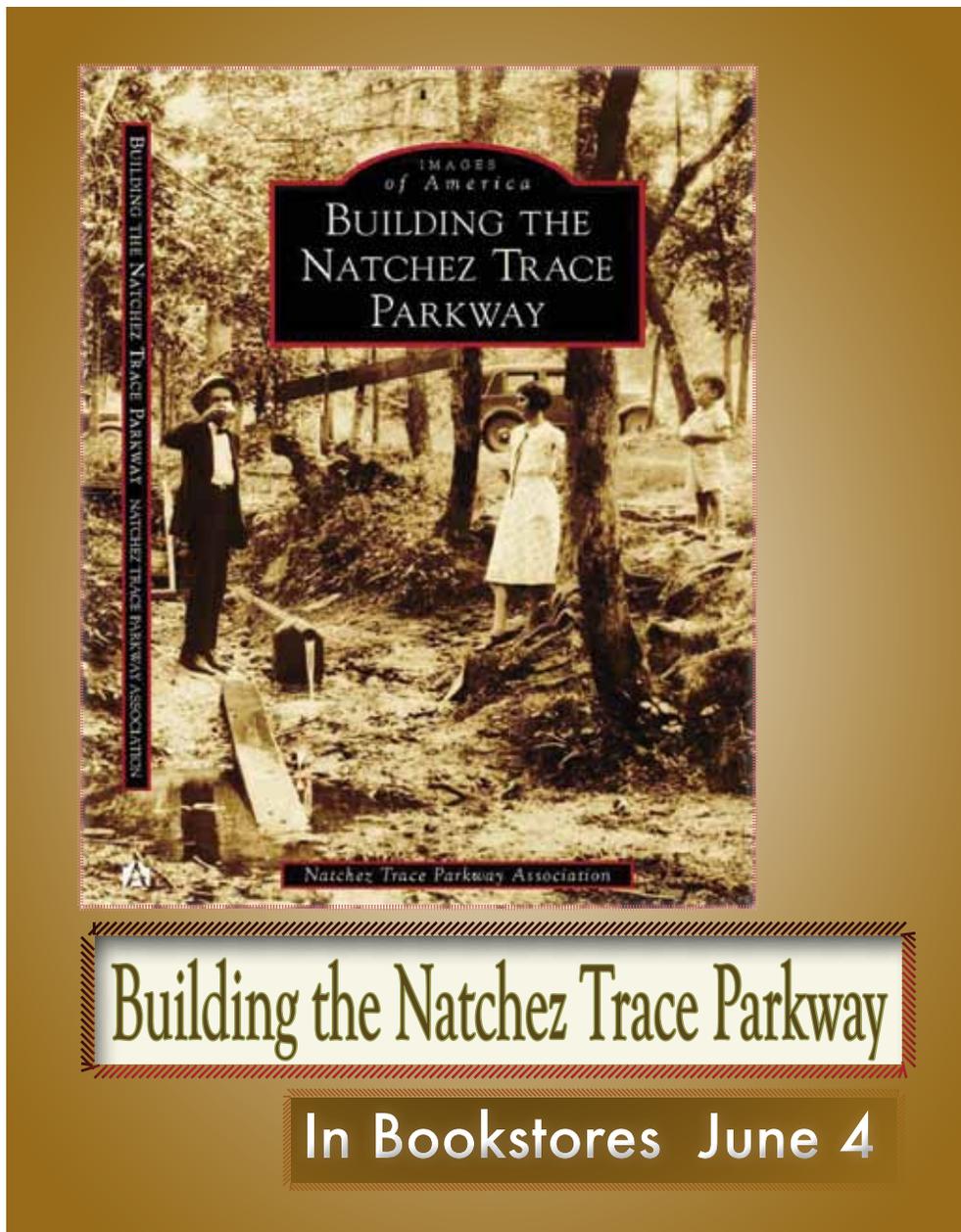
“Building the Natchez Trace Parkway” available in June

Our photo history book celebrating the 75th anniversary of the Natchez Trace Parkway, and in particular, the role of the Natchez Trace Parkway Association, goes on sale June 4. “Building the Natchez Trace Parkway” is published by Arcadia Publishing as part of its “Images of America” series. It will be available in bookstores in towns along the parkway.

The book is the first to tell the story of parkway, from the efforts of the DAR to mark the old Trace to the completion of the motor road in 2005. The dedicated efforts of early Association leaders to encourage the federal government to build a three-state national park is remarkable. As the book demonstrates, the grassroots effort often faced obstacles that seemed insurmountable at the time, but the goals were achieved through a strong partnership among the Association, the states and the National Park Service, and with the critical support of senators and congressmen. The story serves as an inspiration as we are working to support the completion of the visitor amenities and the interpretation of the historic sites.

The book uses available historic photos to tell the story. Unfortunately, photos of all the leaders who made a difference could not be found.

As we approach the 75th anniversary in 2013, it is important to take time to acknowledge all the people who make the parkway a reality. We are able to enjoy it today because of their personal dedication and sacrifice of time and resources. The story encourages the cur-



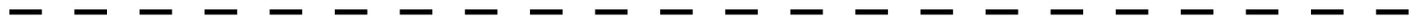
rent generation to make an equally dedicated push to complete the visitor amenities for the benefit of future generations.

As the book concludes, the parkway is only the latest chapter in the fascinating history of the old Natchez Trace. Copies can be purchased in advance on the Arcadia Publishing website.

JOIN THE ASSOCIATION

If you are not already a member or if you have not renewed your membership, please complete the form below and mail it to the Treasurer. As you can see, we have a lot of work in progress, and we need your help. Together we can help the Park Service make the Natchez Trace Parkway the destination park that was envisioned in the 1930s when work began. This is the last stage of development as the visitor amenities are completed.

Clip, complete and return with payment to:
Natchez Trace Parkway Association Treasurer
P. O. Box 156
Franklin, TN 37065-0156



Name: _____

Company (if applicable): _____

Mailing Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Email Address: _____

Contact Telephone Number: _____

Please select one:

_____ \$25 Individual

_____ \$50 Business, Government, Organization

For Office Use Only: RDC _____ CK# _____ AMT _____ ENT _____

Thank you for your support of the Natchez Trace Parkway!

THE NATCHEZ TRACE PARKWAY ASSOCIATION IS A NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION CHARTERED IN MISSISSIPPI, ALABAMA AND TENNESSEE DEDICATED TO SUPPORTING THE NATCHEZ TRACE PARKWAY.

You have received this newsletter as a member of the Association or as a friend of the Association. Newsletters will be sent as news warrants. To be removed from the email list or for information about NTPA, please contact info@natcheztrace.info.