

"Twelve-Twelve Day"

Lewis and Clark Bicentennial Commemoration

Lewis and Clark State Historic Site

Hartford, Illinois

December 12-14, 2003

After Action Report

Background: On December 12, 1803, Captain Lewis' Company stopped at the confluence of the Missouri and Mississippi Rivers near a small tributary known as Wood River (or River DuBois). Here they built a small fort consisting of four enlisted men's quarters at the corners of the post and a central building for the Captains, guards, and storage for supplies. They hired a women to cook and do laundry for the men and built her a small cabin just outside the stockade. Here the expedition trained, bought supplies, and planned the expedition turning a rag-tag outfit into a well-oiled, well-disciplined, Army unit.

The U. S. Army Corps of Engineers, the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR), Lewis and Clark State Historic Site, Illinois Lewis and Clark Bicentennial Commission, and the Alton Area Convention and Visitor's Bureau partnered to provide a 3-day event to commemorate the visit of Captain Lewis' Company and the contributions that Fort DuBois gave to this Voyage of Discovery. The event was located in the newly constructed 1802 American fort, the newly completed Lewis and Clark State Historic Site Visitor Center, and the surrounding grounds.

Action/Results:

Friday - Sunday, December 12-14, 2003:

- Ceremonies were held on and off site in the early morning and late evening. Speakers and dignitaries lined stages at two different locations to commemorate the event.
- The Corps of Engineers' Lewis and Clark Reenactment Team (Captain Lewis' Company) arrived as guests and invitees of the local group known as "The Detachment" and manned the Fort with them. All told, approximately 18 reenactors manned the reconstructed barracks for the weekend. The Fort and grounds were open to the public. This is a destination stop and visitors from around the region, the country, and the world (at least one female visitor who identified herself as being from England stopped to gather information) attended the event.
- The Corps of Engineers' Team consisted of:

- Ken Wilk, NWK (Assistant National L&C Coordinator)
 - Jeff Boutwell, SWF (Park Ranger)
 - Jon Carlson, NWW (Park Ranger)
 - Patrick Kline, LRP (Park Ranger)
 - Rick Magee, NAE (Park Ranger)
 - David Quebedeaux, SAS (Park Ranger)
- The activities of each day centered around a soldier's life in garrison. Parades were conducted in the morning, at noon, and in the evening. Drills were conducted. Guards were posted. Meals were fixed. And the details were run with such things as: firewood gathering, water buckets refilled, fires stoked, candles re-supplied, supplies inventoried, dried, and cleaned, etc.
 - Historical Coincidence:
 - On 12-12-1803, The Expedition arrived on the site – On 12-12-2003, we arrived and occupied the site as close to the original as possible.
 - The Expedition built a fort to occupy for 6 months – We occupied a reconstruction of the same fort.
 - On 12-13-1803, It snowed on the Expedition – On 12-13-2003, It snowed on us.
 - This was a total immersion living history event. All reenactors lived, ate, and slept in the fort. Making this a truly unique experience for the visitor as well as the participant.

Lessons Learned:

- This was an successful partnership of a Federal, State, and Municipal, and entities. This is due, in great part, to the fact that egos and politics were not involved in the planning. Each partner was committed to the success of the event and was willing to do their part. Everyone kicked in to make the event a success.
- Again, communication was key to the overall success. Everyone knew what was expected of them. The public knew what was happening even when Mother Nature's snowfall forced moving the speakers inside out of the weather.
- We greeted and educated approximately 1,500 visitors in approximately two days of programming. Site personnel estimate that we would have seen more if the weather would have been nicer.

PHOTOS BELOW



< Color party raising flag in front of visitors center. Jeff Boutwell and David Quebedeaux participating.

Reenacting the marksmanship matches > held at the fort. Jeff Boutwell shooting, David Quebedeaux and Jon Carlson participating.



< Equipment stored inside our barracks room.

Bunks and equipment > David Quebedeaux lighting a candle lantern.



All photos submitted by Pat Kline, LRP.