



*Meriwether
Lewis*

**US ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS
and the
LEWIS AND CLARK
BICENTENNIAL COMMEMORATION**



William Clark

**“THE FALLS OF THE OHIO”
LOUISVILLE, KY / CLARKSVILLE, IN
October 14-26, 2003
After Action Report**

Background: In 2000, the National Council for the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial decided to highlight some of the more nationally significant festivals and events and call them “Signature Events”. These events were to be those of nationwide historical significance, have the potential of high visitation, and be multicultural in nature. The Falls of the Ohio was designated as the second of these Signature Events. Hosted by the Louisville/Clarksville Bicentennial Commission, this was the first Signature Event that was geared for the general public. Although the anticipated attendance for this event was 50,000, the total attendance for the 2-week event was 110,000 including approximately 5,000 children from registered school groups. The weather for the weekend of October 18/19 was perfect for an outdoor event. The attendance for those two days alone totaled nearly 60,000! (At the end of the end of those two days, most of us felt we had, indeed, talked to just about all 60,000.)

The event was to be held on both sides of the river (the first week in Louisville, KY the second week in Clarksville, IN). However, because one of the major donors funding the move dropped out at the last minute, the decision was made by the Signature Events Committee to keep everything on the Louisville side of the river on the Great Lawn, a major riverfront park in downtown Louisville. This decision did create a few problems while eliminating others. The few venues that were located on the Clarksville side (Falls of the Ohio Interpretive Center, Shawnee Village) did not receive the visitation anticipated. The positive aspect of the event staying in Louisville was that none of the exhibitors or vendors had to pack up and reestablish at a second site.

The kickoff for the event was scheduled for October 14. However, in keeping with historical accuracy, it rained that day *-extremely hard-* to the point that opening events scheduled for 9am and after on that day were postponed until October 15. MG Strock had come from HQ to attend the opening and give some remarks on the 14th. He did attend the opening breakfast but was unable to stay for the rescheduled ceremonies the next day. Col. Rowlette, the Louisville District Engineer, gave the opening comments at the rescheduled event opening on Wednesday October 15th.

Action: The Corps was involved in 8 separate venues during this commemorative event – COE Exhibit; COE L&C Reenactors; COE Exhibit barge; Corps of Discovery 2; the

Tent of Many Voices; Falls Regional Tent; school programs; a Michael Haynes art exhibit and an exhibit at the Kentucky Center for the Arts. In addition, the Corps representatives were guests at a special reception held at Filson on Main. Each of these is addressed below.

COE Exhibit: The Corps exhibit was part of a contingent of agencies, communities, and vendors sponsoring a booth/exhibit in the Exhibit Tent on the Great Lawn. The Corps exhibit had three parts – two backdrops (one of the L&C expedition done by NAE (Rick Magee)) and the other of the modern army connection (done by the Corps national team), a display of the Discovery Box, and an information table. The information table contained a variety of COE brochures including the Eastern Legacy, the Lower Missouri River Map, the brochure “The U.S. Army and the Lewis and Clark Expedition” recently published by the Center of Military History, and the “Zap the Zebra” brochure assembled by the 100th Meridian Group to combat the spread of zebra mussels. Susie Kline (LRP), Mike Estock (LRP), Brad Cox (NWK), Dave White (NWK), Joe Kolodziej (LRH), Craig Lykins (SPA), Mark Wade (SAS), Dave Quebedeaux (SAS), Alana Kirkpatrick (NWS) and Jean Nauss (NWD) all took turns in manning the Corps booth. Roughly 20,000 visitors came to the COE exhibit booth area.

COE L&C Reenactors: Set up in a prominent corner of the Great Lawn (near several parking lots, walking path, and the playground) was the encampment of Capt. Lewis’ Company. Capt. Lewis’ Company included members of the Corps of Engineers and representatives of the Frontier Army Living History Association. The encampment consisted of one common tent and three small shelter tents along with the many accoutrements that would have been taken by the expedition. The Corps representatives, all dressed in period 1803 Army uniforms, included Ken Wilk (NWK), Rick Magee (NAE), Pat Kline (LRP), Dave Quebedeaux (SAS), Ed Shirley (SWF), Jon Carlson (NWP), Jeff Boutwell (SWF), Robbie Henderson (SWF), Larry Spisak (LRP), and Craig Rockwell (NWW). Tim Bischoff (MVS) alternated between portraying Pvt. Peter Weiser and George Drouillard, the Shawnee Indian sign-talker. Capt. Lewis’ Company posted front and rear guards, performed daily tasks around the camp (cleaning guns, repairing leather goods, etc), and finished off each day with a “whiskey” ration (water) and a dance reel. This was an extremely popular venue. Its location, at a major intersection of various footpaths, brought many visitors. Nearly all of the school groups that came to the event stopped by the camp to talk to the men and learn more about the details of the expedition. For the closing at the end of each day, the men would try to enlist dance partners from the visiting public. If there were no takers, they danced with each other as on the original expedition. This was, by far, one of the most popular venues at the Signature Event.

COE Exhibit barge: The Pittsburgh District office donated the use of the exhibit barge. Exhibits were designed and assembled by a team of folks from within LRD. The exhibits dealt with the Eastern Legacy Recruitment Phase of the Expedition and the modern Ohio River. Exhibits included a working model of a modern lock and dam, a wicket dam model, and numerous static displays about life on the Ohio River. Also on the barge was a full-scale model of the “Experimental Boat” taken by the expedition, a bull boat, several exhibit cases containing items from the Discovery Box, a small scale version of

the front of a keelboat (for kids to climb on and enjoy), and three exhibit cases containing taxidermy animals and birds that would have been encountered on the expedition. Also included were panel displays about the Indians of the region, the 99th Regional Support Command, and a listing of the items taken by the expedition. The barge was staffed by a contingent of Corps folks who assisted anywhere from one day to one week. These included Jay VanHoose (LRH), Amanda Patrick (LRL), Rich Picket (LRC), Norma Hall (MVS), Mike Loesch (LRD) Dan Alexander (LRL), Paige Cruz (LRD) Ross Ratcliff (LRB) Todd Emenputsch (MVR) Becky Hayes (MVS) Stan Akin (LRL) Lisa Freeman (LRL) , Dave Cable (LRL) Barkley Nash (LRL) and Hank Triplett (LRL). These folks were familiar with the Lewis and Clark story and were able to weave together some tremendous programs for the visitors coming to the barge.

The unfortunate part of the barge experience is that its location did not make it readily apparent that it was an exhibit. Originally, the exhibit barge was to be moored at the end of the Great Lawn so it would be easily seen. Because of some last minute safety concerns about being too far into the channel or blocking the harbor patrol boats, it was moved to a point on the far west end of the park, separated from the rest of the event by an inlet and fountain. After placing additional signage and having it listed for teachers and school groups to tour, attendance pick up. However, the barge still only received about 30 percent of the total visitation to the Signature Event.

Corps of Discovery 2 – 200 Years to the Future (aka: Corps 2) – The Corps 2 exhibit itself consists of approximately 32 panels with an associated audiotape headset that discuss Jefferson’s vision; Lewis, Clark, and the members of the expedition; with the remainder depicting the natural resources and the Native American influences on the expedition. In addition, Raystown Lake Project (NAB) constructed and donated a ½-size land-based replica of a keelboat. Visitors were encouraged to come into the keelboat for interpretive programs about the expedition. During the Signature Event, COE park rangers Alana Kirkpatrick (NWS), Brad Cox (NWK), Dave White (NWK); Joe Kolodziej (LRH), Mike Estock (LRP), Craig Lykins (SPA), and Mark Wade (SAS) worked in their park ranger uniform to provide interpretive talks and information to dignitaries and members of the public visiting the keelboat exhibit. In addition Tim Bischoff (MVS) and Dave Quebedeaux (SAS) provided additional interpretation while dressed as George Droulliard (the Shawnee Indian sign-talker) or in a replica of the 1803 Army uniform, respectively.

Tent of Many Voices (TOMV) – This is a venue associated with Corps 2 (same portable generator provides electricity for heat and lighting for both) but separate from it. TOMV has a small stage for presentations and seating capacity of 150. Chuck Parrish (LRL), Craig Rockwell (NWW), Tim Bischoff (MVS), and Dave Quebedeaux (SAS) gave interpretive talks during the Signature Event. Mr. Parrish’s talk was on the general topic of the Expedition with a focus on the Eastern Legacy. Mr. Rockwell did a portrayal of Capt. William Clark and discussed the expedition, his relationship with the men of the expedition and his work journaling and drawing maps. Mr. Bischoff did a portrayal of George Droulliard as the Shawnee Indian sign-talker for the expedition. Mr. Quebedeaux, dressed in a replica of 1803 Army uniform, discussed the Diplomacy of the Lewis and Clark Expedition.

The Falls of the Ohio Regional Tent – The Falls Tent was set up for a smaller audience. Included in the tent were displays concerning places of note in the Louisville area as well as a speaker's stage. Several COE representatives spoke at different times at this venue. Mr. Larry Spisak (LRP) portrayed George Gibson of the expedition. He demonstrated the fiddle and talked about the music of the early 1800's. Mr. Rick Magee (NAE) talked about recruitment for the expedition with a discussion of the skills and values needed for the completion of the mission. Mr. Ken Wilk (NWK) discussed the military aspect of the expedition and the uniforms worn by the members. Mr. Spisak, Mr. Magee, and Mr. Wilk all wore replicas of the 1803 Army uniform during their presentations. Mrs. Jean Nauss presented programs on the Seven Army Values with examples of each value reinforced with stories from the expedition and items from the Corps Discovery Box.

School Programs: A contingent of Corps park rangers and reenactors went to five schools in the Louisville, KY/Clarksville, IN area during the Signature Event. These programs generated over 12,000 significant interpretive contacts in the five days. The presentation topics included the use of Indian sign language, the trio of pests of the expedition; diplomacy of the expedition, music of the early 1800's and a variety of other topics. Tim Bischoff (MVS), Rick Magee (NAE), Alana Kirkpatrick (NWS), Craig Rockwell (NWW), Joe Kolodziej (LRH), Dave Quebedeaux (SAS), Larry Spisak (LRP), and Jean Nauss (NWD) took part in giving the educational programs. Mr. Bischoff portrayed George Droulliard while Mr. Magee, Rockwell, Quebedeaux and Spisak were all in period uniform of the 1803 Army. All of the Corps programs were extremely successful and garnered the participants many thanks from both students and teachers. (An interesting note: At one school, Dave Quebedeaux, with the encouragement of the assistant principal, was out on a "hunting" expedition in the school courtyard during one of his breaks. By peeking in the windows, he frightened 2 little kindergarten girls so much that they didn't come out from behind their teacher's desk for the rest of the day! They liked the programs...just not that "big Army guy!")

Michael Haynes art exhibit: The Corps commissioned five Lewis and Clark Expedition paintings from artist Michael Haynes ("Recruitment at Ft. Massac", "Independence Creek", "Pursuit of the Sioux", "Bestride the Mighty Missouri", and "Trade at Dismal Niche"). Mr. Haynes has worked extensively with the Corps and the Army to ensure the 1803 Army uniform accuracy in his paintings. The paintings were initially set up in the Old Courthouse where, it was thought by the event organizers, they would be protected from the elements but would still receive plenty of visitation from the general public. After having the paintings on display there for four days, there were less than 50 visitors to see the paintings. Most that did come by were either employees of the Courthouse or people there for other business. Because we had to devote one person to the Courthouse to be able to answer questions and because the Courthouse would not be open on the weekend, it was determined that to get the greatest viewing, the paintings needed to be moved. After some coordination, the paintings were moved to Locust Grove, the home of Clark's sister Lucy. Here, the paintings were viewed by busloads of visitors coming in to see the home and also by those attending a special event there on the evening of October 23. Total visitation to the paintings while at Locust Grove was 924. The added bonus was that the Corps did not have to provide someone to explain the paintings and ensure their safety as the museum staff was well versed and agreed to help. (One

interesting side note to having the paintings at the Courthouse was that Jon Carlson, one of the members of the Corps L&C reenactor group, was asked to be a witness at a wedding that took place there.)

Exhibit at the Kentucky Center: On Oct 15 & 16, the Corps of Engineers was asked to set up the Discovery Box at the Kentucky Center. The Corps was one of 25 exhibitors and the only Federal agency asked to participate. These dates corresponded to the anniversary of the opening of the Center. From the Signature Event coordinator's perspective, it was a way to attract folks that worked in the downtown area to come to the waterfront and participate in the Lewis and Clark Event. Although the Center was only open for only 3 hours on each of those two days, over 700 people came by the Corps booth and asked question about Lewis and Clark. Manning the booth at the Kentucky Center were Susie Kline (LRP), Jeff Boutwell (SWF), Joe Kolodziej (LRH), and Robbie Henderson (SWF). Mr. Boutwell and Mr. Henderson were in the Army uniform with overshirt. The Corps did receive a tremendous "thank you" from the organizers of this portion of the event.

Special Reception: Filson on Main: On Friday October 24, the Corps of Engineers were guests of the Filson on Main (a branch of the Filson Historical Society) at a special reception. Although open to the public for a small fee, the Corps was invited as guests of the Filson in appreciation for our support in reviewing the Lewis and Clark exhibit that was on display and our extensive participation in the Signature Event.

Lessons learned

1. This was really the first Signature Event that was for the general public. Venues could have been organized somewhat better by the Events Committee. For example, there appeared to be no rhyme or reason as to where exhibits were placed. The Shawnee were at one corner, BLM in the middle, Corps reenactors at another corner, St. Charles reenactors in another corner. The event organizers should have coordinated better with the Federal agencies as many of our outdoor exhibits could have flowed from one into the other. For example: start with the Shawnee camp, then Corps L&C reenactors, BLM with early surveying, BOR with settlement and water management, USGS with modern mapping, etc. A flow to the exhibits was definitely lacking. Having said that, the Federal agencies are in the assist mode only. How the individual signature event committees wish to set up their events is entirely up to them...we can only make recommendations.
2. There was a whole mix of folks in the exhibit tent. Vendors selling items, were mixed in with communities promoting tourism, and the federal agencies that could do programming were scattered in between. It was a very ineffective way of enticing the public to enter. Some would peek in, see candles and pictures for sale and leave without seeing the other exhibits. The suggestion has been made to subsequent signature event committees to keep those that are selling items in a separate tent and completely away from those agencies that can do programming.
3. One thing instituted in Louisville that was not done in Charlottesville was a Corps "end of day" wrap up meeting. Those participating really liked this idea. It gave everyone a chance to talk about the day's events, find out about any schedule changes for

the next day, and talk about any problems that arose. This will definitely be continued at all future Signature Events.

4. Another item that was missing at the event site was a very visible “Events Information Booth” where people could pick up a schedule of the days activities including speakers, special activities and other presentations. As it was, anyone wearing credentials played this role. Although there were 2 small tables at both corners, they were not sufficiently large or prominent to attract much attention.

5. At the Corps 2 exhibit, several suggestions were made to put the names of the tribes represented next to the appropriate screen print. Several visitors asked who the various tribes were and although they could be named, there was no way to place the names and the pictures together. Also, the audio portion of the exhibit was still too long. Many people discarded the headsets after 5-10 minutes and just wandered through the exhibit. Because of the length of the recordings, that left many people standing in line waiting to see the exhibit. This wasn't bad with temperatures in the 60's but it could be horrendous in Kansas City in July or Omaha in August!

6. The overall event site was good with plenty of room. However, having an interstate running overhead, it was difficult to speak at a normal voice. Many folks had to talk fairly loud to be heard. (It is hard to compete with car horns, jake breaks, and general traffic noise.) Recommend that all other event sites take a look at possible traffic noise and minimize it as much as possible (i.e. through the use of shelterbelts, repositioning exhibits, etc).

7. The ladies who ran the hospitality tent deserve a lot of credit for their efforts. The hospitality tent was a great idea. It gave exhibitors a place to hold small meetings, get warmed up with some coffee and grab some water. This needs to be encouraged at other events.

Future outcome: The next Signature Event will be March 10-14, 2004 for the Three Flags Event in St. Louis, MO. The nature of the Corps and Army presence at this event is questionable at this time. This is another event that may be very limited in public scope with academic and scholarly presentations and a grand period ball that is by invitation only (plus \$500/person). The Corps is continuing to work with event organizers as well as the National L&C Council to ensure the presence of all of the Federal MOU agencies.

Final thoughts: The Corps of Engineers contingent was always the first to arrive at the event site every morning and one of the last to leave every night. All of the COE participants went out of their way to help out wherever possible. This included assisting other exhibitors getting set up every morning, parking lot duty, and providing general direction. With the large number of positive comments that we received from teachers, students, and others interested in the proper look to the Army uniform of the time period and the relationship with the Corps of Engineers, the expense of having the extra rangers in period uniform was well worth it. In addition, the support of the Corps uniformed rangers was great for instant recognition at the event site.