

# Shinnin' Times

April 2013

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A Publication of the Early Arkansaw Reenactors Association (EARA)

Web Page: [www.arkansaw.us](http://www.arkansaw.us)

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## BIG NEWS!

At the Southwest Regional Rendezvous held in Texas earlier this month, it was voted to come to Arkansas for 2015. Nonose was selected as as Bosshway! More information to follow as available.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

**APRIL 5 – 7**

### **White Oak Lake State Park Colonial Event 1700s Colonial Living History & Skirmish**

A Colonial & Early American Event

April 5-7th, 2013

White Oak Lake State Park

563 HWY 387

Bluff City, AR 71722

Friday, 5th: Live fire, rifle, and smoothbore competition, shooting at English and French Silhouette targets.

Saturday, 6th, Morning: Live fire competition again.

Sat. Afternoon: Tactical: Scenario depends on who shows up.

Sunday 7th: Hawk, knife, & fire start competition.

White Oak Lake State Park is located about 15 miles West of Camden, Arkansas, near Bluff City, off of HWY 24. The Park will provide water, firewood, toilets, & showers.

Call the Park to register (870-685-2748).

This event is co-sponsored by the Early Arkansaw Reenactors Association (EARA) and Arkansas Dept. of Parks & Tourism.

Thanks! See you soon

William Hardage  
[britishofficer@yahoo.com](mailto:britishofficer@yahoo.com)

### **APRIL 12 – 14, 2013 Boy Scouts of America Scout-O-Rama**

The Boy Scouts of America are hosting Scout-O-Rama at Springlake Park in Texarkana, Texas **April 12, 13, & 14**. This is where the scouts can show off what they have learned and do their recruiting for upcoming boy scouts. We will have a Mountain Man camp and everyone is invited. We try to have some demonstrations set up. Venture Crew 3 will be there. If you have any questions call Teresa at 903-671-2450 or email me at [gwynnfeodre@yahoo.com](mailto:gwynnfeodre@yahoo.com). Thank you

### **MAY 2 – 5, 2013 Pioneer Days Garland County – Hot Springs, AR**

Friends of the Garland County Courthouse are hosting "Pioneer Days: The History and Heritage of Garland County" on **May 2-5** at the Garland County Fairgrounds in Hot Springs, AR. On Thursday, May 2 and Friday, May 3, we are opening for school field trips. And, of course, on Saturday, May 4 will be our big day for the general public. We would love to have reenactors participate in this event even if folks couldn't do it for

all days, we would take what we could get. We are aiming for the 1800s time period. If you would like more information, please contact me. I would love to hear from you. Thanks.

Denice Davis  
[denisjamar@gmail.com](mailto:denisjamar@gmail.com)

### **MAY 4 – 5, 2013 Open House Pioneer Village – Searcy, AR**

Pioneer Village in Searcy is having Open House the first weekend of May, if anyone wants to come out for it. We can always use more volunteers for historical demonstrations.

We have been given a source of logs for the new trappers cabin, and they are beginning to be brought to the village in preparation for building, if anyone wants to help with that project.

Melinda  
[mlaf@sbcglobal.net](mailto:mlaf@sbcglobal.net)

### **MAY 16-19, 2013 Saline County Voo**

We are having a Voo at the crossing of the Southwest Trail over the Saline River in South Pulaski Co. The City of Benton/Friend of the Bridge are making a park and we are invited to have a Voo in it. More info will be available in the next newsletter.

## A LETTER FROM ARKANSAW

Arkansaw (Nov-Dec 1837)

*My dear mother*

*I wrote to you last from Alabama, it is possible you may want to know where I went to, next, and by looking above, you will see I am writing in an Arkansaw swamp. Such a trip as I had across the country to the Miss' sometimes on a stage, sometimes in a mud wagon-& sometimes taking it afoot, with a nigger carrying my trunk on his head. The last was far the pleasantest-&interesting to the highest degree when I got among the immense train of emigrants to Texas. Among such people my pedestrian powers were duly appreciated. At last I struck upon a great band of the Chickasaws bound to new lands far in the West. Some of the agents & U.S. officers were old acquaintances (James Robertson, Louisville lawyer, probably Copts. Buckner and Phillips, note 6. The latter came for New Jersey.) & rec me with open arms & with them I crossed the Mississippi River & encamped in the Arkansaw. It is said "in medio tutissimus," & doubtless it may be the safest to be in the middle ranks of life & society, but I am sure it is not the pleasantest, because it is the vulgarest. If therefore I could not command the most refined society, I would choose that of the woods.*

*It has been said by somebody that there exists in every man, a little remnant of the savage-& after my disgusts with what affects to be refined life, I have felt that same small germ*

mightily developed within the past few days. One has such appetite & spirits, & breathes so full & sleeps so sound, after a day's march. I remember years ago, I used in the woods to feel a longing to whoop and halloo, to give vent to high health & spirits, when setting out in the morning for a journey. I thought that years of care & trouble had taken that boyishness petty well out of me, but I find that I have a deal of elasticity in body & mind remaining, only it has been keep down by too severe a weight.

I do not think that I have ever been a witness of so remarkable a scene as was formed by this immense column of moving Indians, several thousand, with the train of Gov' wagons, the multitude of horses; it is said three to each Indian & beside at least six dogs & cats to an Indian. They were all most comfortably clad-the men in complete Indian dress with showy shawls tied in turban fashion round their heads-dashing about on their horses, like Arabs, many of them presenting the finest countenances & figures that I ever saw. (Reported quote in Foreman, note 2, p. 206. See also Josiah Greg, *Commerce of the Prairies: or The Journal of the Santa Fe Trader* (New York: 1844) Vol. II p. 260) The women also very decently clothed like white women, in calico gowns-bout much tidier & better put on than common white-people-& how beautifully they managed their horses, how proud & calm & erect, they sat in full gallop. The young women have remarkably mild & soft countenances & are singularly decorous in their dress & deportment. (H.B. Cushman, *History of the Choctaw, Chickasaw and Natchez Indians*(Greenville, Texas: 1899), 488: "The ancient Chickasaws were deservedly celebrated for their handsome young women; and seldom have I looked upon such specimens of female grace and loveliness as I have seen among the Chickasaws three-quarters of a century ago in their former homes east of the Mississippi River.") There were some white women, wives of Indians & they were decidedly the least neat of the party.

It was a striking scene at night-When the multitudes of fires kindled, showed to advantage the whole face of the country covered with the white tents & white covered wagons, with all the interstices (between them) filled with a dense mass of animal life in the shape of savages, uncouth looking white hunters, the Picturesque looking Indian negroes, (Like their white neighbors in the South, the Chickasaws were slave owners. Wyatt F. Jeltz, "the Relations of Negroes and the Choctaw and the Chickasaw Indians," *Journal of Negro History*, January, 1948, Vol. XXXIII, pp. 24, 28, 30; Foreman, note 2, p. 224.) with dresses belonging to no country but partaking of all, & these changing & mingling with the hundreds of horses hobbled & turned out to feed & the troop of dogs chasing about in search of food-& then you would hear the whoops of Indians calling their family party together to receive their rations, from another quarter a wild song from the negroes preparing the corn, with the strange chorus that the rest would join in-& the waggoners & hunters around their fires would get up their odd singing-&this would set a thousand hounds baying & curs yelping-& then the fires would catch tall dead trees & rushing to the tops throw a strong glare over all this moving scene, deepening the savage traits of the men, & softening the features of the women; till at last I almost thought I was suddenly transported to some oriental land, or that one of the would dreams that are common to men of active imagination was being represented for my amusement in real life.

It was my delight to wander at will, wherever anything strange led me, going into the tents-making friends with the men by shaking hands & with the women by playing with the little fat naked wild children-dividing apples among them, to their

great satisfaction. Great pains were taken by the agents to keep liquor from the men, & few were drunk-the women neither drink nor smoke-but mostly were seated on skins sewing or doing some kind of work-singularly calm & composed-&contrasted with the incessant galloping bout of the men. Only the poorest of the squaws carr burthens-nearly all had ponies for the purpose, which they led, riding (on good side saddles) other horses. The women making their own clothes remarkably well. The fondness of dogs was the most prevalent & amusing. One old woman who had lost her pony was carryings a heavy load on her back with a belt across her forehead-to balance which, she had a basket in front suspended round her neck in which were Nine fine puppies; the respectable mother of which trotted contentedly-though doggedly behind, to see that none were dropped by the way. Some had their cats&litter of kitten-others their favorite chickens ducks & turkeys.

I shall never forget the singular picture the whole party presented, when all were got across the Miss'-& in one dense mass covered the whole open ground on the bank. It was a scene to paint, not describe with words-civilized society is so uniform & tame in the dress & manner & equipage that a crowd has no life in it. Here however no one man was like another, no horse caparisoned like another. Their clothing was of all the bright colors of the rainbow & arranged with every possible variety of form & taste-but all flowing & fantastic & untailorlike. I wish I could have sketched that scene, (Such a sketch would be invaluable, John C. Ewers, Associate Curator of Ethnology, Smithsonian Institution, writes: "In so far as pictures are concerned the Chickasaw seem to have a been pretty much of a lost tribe. Numerous contemporary pictures of Cherokee, Creek Seminole and some Choctaw are available for the period of the "30s. But I don't know of a single picture of Chickasaw of that period.") as they stood each above the other from the water's edge to the top of the ascending ground. They seemed grouped there, to present one grand display of barbaric pomp.

Much money could not compensate for the loss of what I have seen the last few days. With all, there was nixed sympathy for the exiles-for they go unwillingly-whether it be for their good or not-moreover the agents & officers all concurred in speaking of the integrity of the men & the good behavior of the women- keep only liquor away from the men. They said that it rarely happened that any violence was committed by them against the white, but after receiving the worst & strongest provocation.

A curious scene took place-two Indians quarreled & one killed the other. The murderer never attempted to move, but presented himself to be killed by the victim's brother. They tied him to a tree, where he sang his death song-& then one brother came up to strike his tomahawk into his head, the other not wincing the least, at which moment, a white waggoner caught the arm of the avenger & with the aid of others confined him-the doomed man in the meanwhile showing no apparent interest. (Jesse D. Jennings, ed., 'Nutt's trip to the Chickasaw Country,' *Journal of Mississippi History*, Jan 1947, Vol. IX, pp. 39, 46, chronicling a journey by Dr. Rush Nott in 1805, states "they know no punishment but death nor have they any mode of enforcing any law except for murder." But see John R. Swanton, Report, American Bureau of Ethnology, 1926, pp.173, 216.) At last the officers came up & told him to get up & run for his life. The Indian point of honor was satisfied & no deer ever ran faster, than the poor devil out of the camp, probably not to stop till he reaches some other tribe. What curious scenes on does mix in, when moving about our immense country-&my chances have been abundant.

You have just read a letter written by Bowes Reed McIlvaine (1795-1866), son of Senator Joseph McIlvaine of New Jersey, graduated from Princeton, served in the War of 1812 and commercial ventures in Cadis, Spain. He was a wholesale forwarding merchant and president of an insurance company in Louisville. He moved to Kentucky and married Catarine Dumesnil. His journey down the Ohio and up the Tennessee River in the fall of 1837 preceded his journey to Arkansaw in late 1837.

I found his letter put the best thoughts down on paper of how to explain how captivating, embracing, inspiring, romantic, and inviting our times at Rendavoo are. I try to explain to my contemporaries upon them asking "WHY do you go to Voo and live outside without facilities or conveniences for 2 weeks?" I see the looks in their eyes with no understanding or sense of adventure or approval of my explanations. They look at the world through "eyes in 2013" that only see value in what is in a catalogue or at the mall. This ancient letter explains the awe and wonderment that I too feel when I look over our camps and get involved at each Voo in all the campsites and lives of new and old friends. It paints a picture with words that I can see from my experiences at Voo. Life at Voo is not easy at times, but I have times that are more carefree than any other moment in my lifetime that I leave behind for the days at Voo. It fills my spirit anew each time I go to Voo so that I can endure the difficulties of daily life and work. I am setting here on the eve of going to the SWRR and have an unbelievable childlike sense of expectation, just like Christmas Eve and waiting for Santa to bring my presents and all the family to come tomorrow. I too will bring back my memories and share them with you in a letter to HOME...MY home with all my EARA family. "GTT" is on my front door. Looking forward to seeing you all at Woolly.

*MissHattie*

### "MOUNTAIN MAN"

Somewhere off Hwy 154 due west of Oppelo, AR, Big Red, Edie and I were navigating two-lane pothole ridden blacktop. After spilling hot coffee once and biting my tongue another time I began to rein Red in a little bit. He gets confused and thinks that he is meant to fly more than roll. We were in the sparsely populated Ouachita Mountains of north central Arkansas and other than a circling buzzard, all in front of Red seemed devoid of life.

Rounding a bend after ascending a small mountain by a wide river, all that changed. Here, seemingly the middle of nowhere, was an encampment of at least two hundred people bustling about performing various tasks. There were camp fires burning in front of a myriad of tents and teepees. Do you think an investigation was in order? Red parked nicely by a little truck and Edie and I snatched up some gear and got ready to click. "Howdy y'all", were the first words out of "Mountain Man's" mouth as my camera began to fire away. There before me stood a huge



long-haired bearded man with buckskins for shirt and trousers, a skunk pelt for a hat and a long bowie knife shoved under his belt. He had a welcoming smile which provided relief because of the mental parallels I was drawing between he, me, the bowie knife and how the skunk hat had come to be. Believe me, this guy appeared that he would be quite adroit at ANY

outdoor related task. "Come on ova by the fore", he beckoned and it being a cold November afternoon, we fell in behind him. There was a cauldron of bubbling liquid on the "fore" and a most savory odor wafted up from it.

After some introductions and a little stew from the cauldron, he got us up to speed on what was going on. This was a frontier rendezvous we had stumbled upon! Soon enough we met White Witch and Frontier Woman. These people dress, cook, eat and generally engage period correct behavior when they rendezvous with each other. It was a full blown show with tomahawk throwing, quilt making, musket shooting, blacksmithing and plenty of great smelling cooking mixed with the odor of hardwood smoke from the fires.

I don't remember his proper name but that matters little, the timeline had jumped 200 years in just a few minutes. Looking toward Red, all I saw were some old horses and a worn out wagon. My mouth had greasy stew on it that I wiped off with my sleeve following the examples of my new-found friends So, what did I have to fear or worry about in my new environment?! Nothing! After all, "Mountain Man" was my new best buddy. He had food, he had lodging, and I could tell he had never been crossed! If you are in the area and see him, accept his invitation without fear, "Git you sum stew and saddle in by the fore for a lil' chit-chat!" Give Frontier Woman a kiss for me and tell them both I will see them next November.

I photographed this fellow at the 2011 Rendezvous at Petit Jean. My wife and I have enjoyed meeting the people at the Petit Jean Rendezvous. Do you know this man and do you have an e-mail address for him? I would like to contact him and thank him personally.

In December of 2012 I started a facebook page where I post interesting photographs and write stories to accompany them. The stories are a mixture of reality and fantasy. Let me know if you like them! Also, let me know how I can contact this person if possible. Many thanks!

Brian M. Buckner

Brian Buckner Photography

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### UPCOMING EVENTS

If you know of any events that are not on our calendar of Upcoming Events, please send them to Renee at [bubbamoore1208@gmail.com](mailto:bubbamoore1208@gmail.com).

#### APRIL 2013

##### **5-7 – White Oak Lake State Park Colonial Event.**

1700s Colonial/ Rev War living history and skirmish  
Contact William Hardage (501-627-6313 or [britishofficer@yahoo.com](mailto:britishofficer@yahoo.com)) or Ed Williams ([ed\\_laurine@juno.com](mailto:ed_laurine@juno.com) or 501-944-0736)

##### **5-7 – Twin Bridges Mountain Man Spring**

**Rendezvous**, near West Plains, MO

**13 – 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday at Cadron.** Undetermined event at this time.

**19-21 – 2013 Woolly Hollow Rendezvous.** Contact: Ree Walker ([tomandree@yahoo.com](mailto:tomandree@yahoo.com))

#### MAY 2013

**2-5 – Pioneer Days**, Garland County – Hot Springs, AR

**3-5 – Rendezvous at Pomme de Terre Lake**  
Damsite, MO. Black powder shoot; hawk contest, etc.  
**4-5 – Open House - Pioneer Village, Searcy, AR**  
**16-19 – Saline County Voo**  
**17-19 – Rendezvous at Rockaway Beach, Missouri**  
**10-12 – Trade Days at Cadron**  
**11 – 2nd Saturday at Cadron**  
**25 – 2nd Annual Audubon Colonial Market Faire,**  
10 AM-4 PM. For more info, contact Audubon State Historic Site, St. Francisville, LA (225-635-3739).  
**Late May 2013 – Saline County Bridge Voo**

### JUNE 2013

**8 – 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday at Cadron.** Undetermined event at this time  
**15-22 – High Plains Regional Rendezvous, Blaine, KS**

### JULY 2013

**4 – 4th of July at HAMM**  
**6 – An 1812 Independence Day Celebration, 1 PM -4 PM.** For more info, contact Audubon State Historic Site, St. Francisville, LA (225-635-3739).  
**13 – 2nd Saturday at Cadron.** Undetermined event at this time  
**18-22 – MOJAM** (not an EARA event, but we have had interest as a needed skill/learning event)

### AUGUST 2013

**10 – 2nd Saturday at Cadron.** Undetermined event at this time  
**31 – The Battle of Baton Rouge 1779, 10 AM until 4 PM.** For more info, contact Audubon State Historic Site, St. Francisville, LA (225-635-3739).

### SEPTEMBER 2013

**14 – 2nd Saturday at Cadron.** Undetermined event at this time  
**13-15 – Indian Heritage Days Rendezvous, Calico Rock, AR.** (Contact James and Sharon Ross (870-368-2273, his cell 870-615-3120, or [mountainmanrss@aol.com](mailto:mountainmanrss@aol.com))  
**20-22 (tentatively) – Old Washington Soggy Bottoms**

### OCTOBER 2013

**8-12 – 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Leslie Rendezvous, Leslie AR –** early setup 8<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup>.  
**11-12 – Cadron Days**  
**12 – 2nd Saturday at Cadron.** Undetermined event at this time  
**18-20 – Hardy Voo, Hardy, AR**

### NOVEMBER 2013

**9 – 2nd Saturday at Cadron.** Undetermined event at this time  
**11/28-12/01 – Petit Jean Voo**

### DECEMBER 2013

**8 – HAMM Christmas**  
**14 – 2nd Saturday at Cadron.** Undetermined event at this time

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## EARA INFORMATION

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"Pepper" is the password to access the online edition of the EARA Newsletter, via the EARA website.

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#### Liability Insurance

To be covered you need to sign the book or if not available, a sheet of paper needs to be signed and sent to Glenn Cook. All volunteer events are covered, whether in the state or not. If in doubt always sign a sheet and send it to EARA President, c/o Glenn Cook, 331 Mark Lynn Cir., Cabot, AR 72023

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