



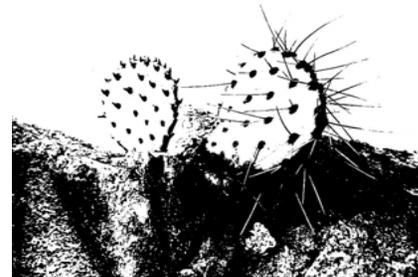
Fort McKavett Gazette

“News of our Volunteers and Friends”

Volume 2, Number 8 **August , 2003**

Fort McKavett State Historical Site
P. O. Box 68
Fort McKavett, Texas 76841

Cactus Growing on the Field Officers Quarters



Upcoming Events

- August 4-9, Inventory of Post Library*
- September 13th-14th, Docent Training at Post*
- October 11th, Fort Davis*
- October 18th, Fort Lancaster*
- October 23-26, JSCAS Star Party*
- October 25, Friends of Fort McKavett Meeting*
- October 25, Fort McKavett reunion*
- November 8-11, Veterans Days Tours and Living History at Fort McKavett*
- December 5-7, Christmas at Fort Concho*

Docent Training Set

Fort McKavett has set Docent Training on September 13th-14th at the Post. More will be sent out on this, but if you would like to start your certification process, contact Gabe at the Site.

Friends Meeting Oct 25th

Saturday, October 25th, the Friends of Fort McKavett State Historic Site will meet at the Schoolhouse on Post after lunch.

JSCAS Star Party

October 23-26, The Johnson Space Center Astronomical Society will host a star party on the Parade Grounds of Fort McKavett.

McKavett Reunion

October 25th, former residents of the town of Fort McKavett are invited to the Post for a reunion and lunch. Recordings of their memories of growing up in the town and area will be made. These recordings will be placed in the Post Library.

From the Archives

HEADQUARTERS DEPARTMENT OF TEXAS,
SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS, *January 11, 1881.*

CIRCULAR
No. 2

I. The following are hereby announced as the best shots in the Department of Texas, as shown by the company target reports received for the month of October, 1880:

Range Yards	NAME	Rank	Co.	REGIMENT	Per cent of Score
700	Joseph Matthews	Private	I	Twenty-second Infy.	55.00
600	William O. Hale	Private	B	Eighth Cavalry	65.00
500	John Wynne	Private	G	Twenty-second Infy.	85.00
400	Frank Roane	Private	H	Twenty-second Infy.	81.00
300	Isaac Taggart	Corp'l	E	Second Artillery	75.00
200	Webster L. Hatcher	Private	D	Eighth Cavalry	80.00
200	Thomas Lea	Private	D	Eighth Cavalry	80.00
100	John Taming	Sergt.	H	First Infantry	100.00

NOTE.—Companies of 19th Cavalry had no target practice during the month; but two of 20th, and two of 24th Infantry.

II. This circular will be read to the companies at the first evening parade after receipt.

BY COMMAND OF BRIGADIER GENERAL AUGER:
THOMAS M. VINCENT,
Assistant Adjutant General.

OFFICIAL:

Before leaving the Post in January, 1881, Private Joseph Matthews of Company I, 22nd Infantry won the Department of Texas best shot competition on the 700 yard range. Pvt. John Wynne of Company G won the 500 yard competition and Pvt. Frank Roane of Company G won the 400 yard competition. Sgt. John Taming of Company H, 1st U.S. Infantry won the 100 yard competition with a score of 100%.

There were 8 different competitions for each month and Fort McKavett Troops won 4 of these during the month of January. They were competing with all the units assigned in the State of Texas. That's quite a feat.

These men were recognized by the Post Commander at Evening Parade.

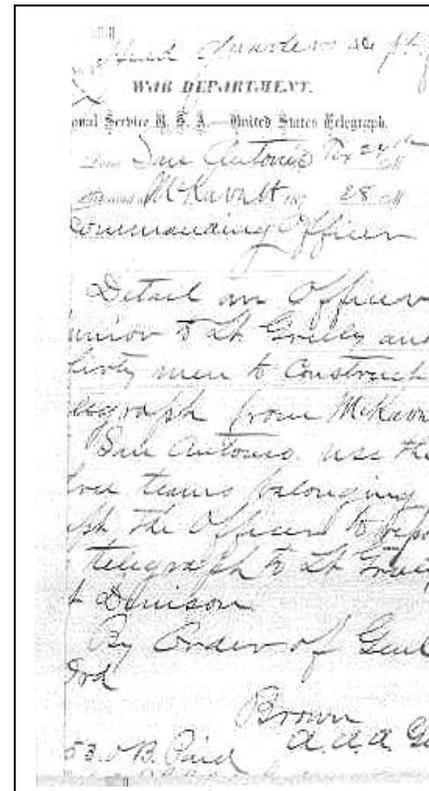


Founder of the National Geographic Society at Fort McKavett

In 1875, 1st Lt. Adolphus Washington Greely of the Signal Corps supervised the construction of the telegraph lines in the Department of Texas. At Fort McKavett, Lt. Charles Davis was assigned by Departmental Headquarters to oversee the construction of telegraph lines from McKavett to Fort Concho. Lt. Henry B. Chamberlain was assigned the task of building the line from Fort McKavett to the Departmental Headquarters in San Antonio. These lines were completed in 1875 and McKavett had direct communications with Posts throughout the nation.

The message to the left shows where the Commander of Fort McKavett was to assign Lt. Chamberlain and 40 men to this construction project under the visiting Greely.

Greely finished this project, going on to explore the Arctic, set up the weather service (originally with the War Dept.), was awarded the Medal of Honor, and made the rank of Major General over the Signal Corps. After he retired, he opened a free library in Washington, D.C. and became the founder of the National Geographic Society.



Building the Hospital in 1871

In a letter of instruction from Quartermaster General of the Army, M.C. Meigs in 1871, he states:

the settlements, there is need of only one skilled mechanic in each branch of work, to lay out, and direct the work.)

"Any ingenious man can drive a nail, or saw a line."

"Fine work is too expensive, at these wilderness posts, I therefore recommend that the Hospital be built, subject to these conditions, by the troops, aided by not over one skilled mason, carpenter, and smith, if such cannot be found in the garrison."

"There is need of only one skilled mechanic in each branch of work, to lay out, and direct the work."

"Any ingenious man can drive a nail or was to a line"

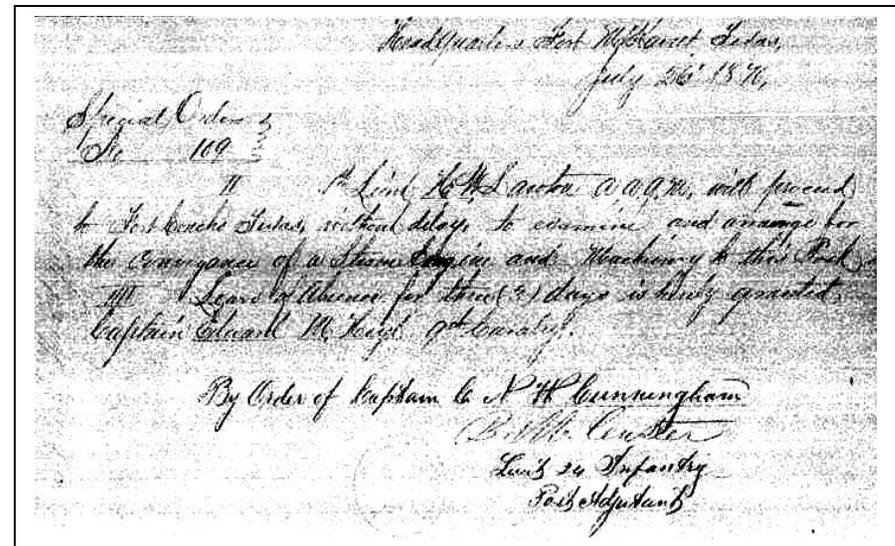
"Fine work is too expensive at these wilderness posts, I therefore recommend that the Hospital be built subject to these conditions, by the troops, aided by not over one skilled mason, carpenter and smith, if such cannot be found in the garrison."

Things have not changed much since then, just ask our Rangers when they are performing stabilization and maintenance on the Post today.



Speaking of the Hospital, have you seen the new Hospital Ward Display in the Dead House? It now has three beds plus the medical displays.

Remember our Cistern from last month...here is the most likely use for it...



On July 26, 1870, 1st Lt. Henry Lawton was sent to Fort Concho to "examine and arrange for conveyance of a Steam Engine and Machinery to this Post" by Captain Cunningham in Special Orders No. 109 of Fort McKavett.

With one of the few photographs we have of the Army at the Post, we know that the saw mill was located in this area. A steam engine would have to have a steady supply of clean water to operate; therefore, the most likely use for the water from this cistern was for that Steam Engine.



Photo of the Saw Mill at Fort McKavett from the Post Library; notice the mules being used for hauling and power

Special Announcement about the use of the Barracks at Fort McKavett

With the Interpretive plan now being implemented at Fort McKavett State Historic Site, there has been a change in the policy of using the Barracks on overnight events. The Interpretive Plan how the Site is officially used as required by Texas Parks and Wildlife Department.

Groups will still be allowed to use the Barracks, but must provide assistance in removing and storing Displays under the direction of Gabe Schooley, the Interpretive Specialist on duty at Fort McKavett. They will also need to assist in replacing the displays after the event is finished.

This will allow the use for the overnight programs and still have visitors being allowed to see displays about the Fort.

Groups will still need to make reservations in a timely manner and then will need to have an advance party meet the Interpretive Specialist during normal working hours to prepare the area that will be used. After the event is over, a party will stay and work with the Interpretive Specialist to make the displays available for visitors.

Most of you have been doing this anyway, but as we move into the new stages of the Interpretive Plan, this will become mandatory.

Please keep this in mind when you are planning your next event.



Upcoming Special Events

I. During our “West Texas Heritage Days” this next March, we will have “Education Day” on Friday where schools from around the area will have their classes out for Living History Demonstrations. Please see if you can come in on Friday early enough to assist with this program.

II. Before the event, TPWD will be going to different schools to give demonstrations of “Field Equipment” and presentations before they come to the Fort. If you can help, contact Gabe at the Post.

III. We will be having Docent Training in September and on more in the Spring of 2004). Everyone who volunteers for tours and Living History demonstrations will be asked to attend. We will give you the dates on this as soon as arrangements are made. This will be a certification process through Texas Parks and Wildlife and the NPS.

IV. Early August, we will be inventorying the Post Library and the Research Library. Gabe Schooley and John Cobb are looking for volunteers to assist with this. This will entail inventory, listing, and computer work. We are setting aside an entire week to get this accomplished. If you can help, contact either Gabe as soon as possible.



JSCAS Star Party

October 23-26, The Johnson Space Center Astronomical Society will host a star party on the Parade Grounds of Fort McKavett.

Saturday afternoon on the 24th, there will be lectures followed by viewing after sunset.

Support our Star Gazers...