

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



Fort McKavett Gazette

“News of our Volunteers and Friends”

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March, 2010

Fort McKavett Upcoming Events

March 5-6, Fort Clark Living History Event
March 13, Fort McKavett Public Spring Star Party

*****March 13-14, Fort Concho, School of the Soldier (Cancelled)*****

March 26 - 27, Fort McKavett* "West Texas Heritage Days" Education Day on Friday
March 27, Fort McKavett, Annual Friends of Fort McKavett Meeting

April 16-18, Fort Richardson Living History Days. Education Day on Friday

April 16-18, Confederate Reunion Grounds*, 16th Annual Civil War Living History and Reenactment, Education Day on Friday

April 30-May 1, Fort Chadbourne, Education day on Friday

May 7-8, Lake Brownwood State Park Open House, Education Day on Friday

May 11, Lake Arrowhead State Park, Education Day

May 16, THC Free Day, Fort McKavett*

May 15-16, Battleship Texas, Armed Forces Day Event

May 14-16, Texas State Railroad, Armed Forces Day Event

May 21-22, Fort Lancaster* Living History Days. Education Day on Friday

June 26-27 Cochran County Last Frontier Days, Morton

October 2, Texas Forts Trail, Frontier Texas, Abilene

October 8-9, Fort Griffin* Living History Event

October 9, Fort McKavett Public Fall Star Party

October 15-16, Fort Stockton Living History Days, Education Day on Friday

*THC Historic Sites Event

Notes from the Post...

It's our annual West Texas Heritage Days time again. See inside for more information.

Don't forget to attend our Friends of Fort McKavett meeting Saturday afternoon.

Also, if you have something for the "silent auction", make sure you let Ken Lester or Buddy know as soon as possible. This is our big money raiser for the year. These funds help us put this event on.

We hope to see everyone at the post in March!

John Cobb
President
Friends of Fort McKavett



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Color Copies of all the Fort McKavett Gazettes can be found at:

www.fortmckavett.org



West Texas Heritage Days, 2010

It's time for our Annual West Texas Heritage Days again. This year, we will need help from our Friends of Fort McKavett serving our meals, bringing in vegetable dishes desserts again and helping clean up. We couldn't do this without the help of our many Friends.

This year, there will be a Friends of Fort McKavett meeting held Saturday afternoon (March 27th). We will start our meeting as soon as festivities are winding down, this is usually around 2:30-3:00). This will not need to be a long meeting since we just had one this last October before moving our Annual Meeting to the March Event.

If you can help with food or serving, contact Buddy at the post as soon as possible. This is greatly appreciated by your Board of Directors and we would like to thank you for your support.

Be sure to bring your cameras to this year's event. You never know what you might get to see!

Helmet Badge



We are all used to seeing the 1880's brass Helmet Badge (Medal) used on Enlisted Men's helmets, but not too many people have the Officers Dress device. It is the same as the Enlisted with the exception of the color. The one to the left is an Infantry Officers Dress Helmet medal. This one is from John Cobb's collection.



Army French Fries?

We tend to think of Fries as being something new to us, but look at this recipe from the 1870's Army Cooks Manual...

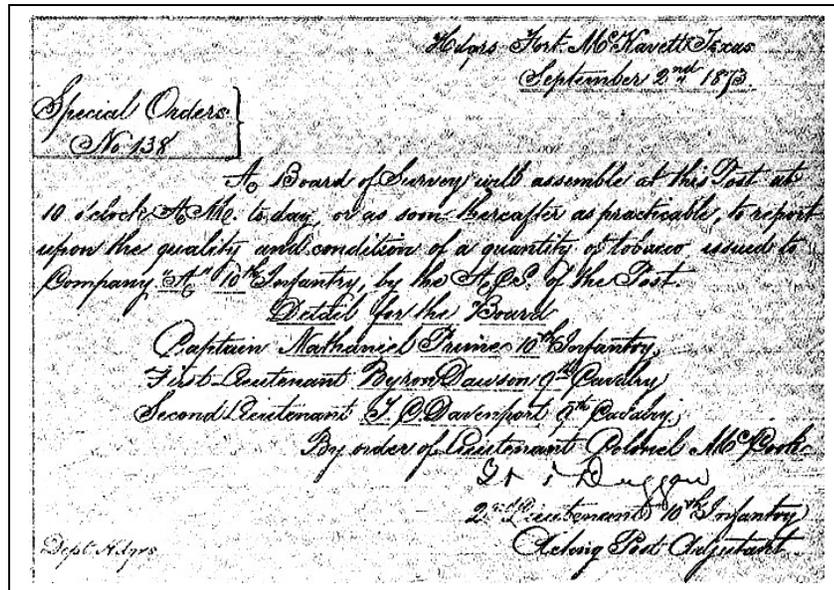
FRIED RAW POTATOES.

Wash, pare, and slice the potatoes very thin. They will hold the shape better if cut lengthwise. Lay them in ice-cold water for ten or fifteen minutes. Drain and spread them on a dry cloth; cover with another dry cloth and press gently to dry each slice.

Have brisk, but not a fierce fire. Put into a frying pan enough lard or dripping so that when melted it will float the potatoes; when this becomes boiling hot drop in the sliced potatoes, a few at a time, so as not to chill the fat. Fry to a light brown; turn if necessary.

When cooked, take them up with an egg-beater or skimmer; put them into a colander and shake them an instant to free them from grease. Put them into a hot dish and season with salt.

Board of Inquiry, September 2nd, 1873



In these Special Orders from Fort McKavett's records, a Captain from the 19th Infantry, a 1st Lt. and a 2nd Lt. from the 9th Cavalry are assigned to a special "Board of Inquiry" to investigate the quality and condition of tobacco issued to Company "A" of the 10th Infantry. This is one of the many chores or duties the Officers of all the frontier posts had to perform daily.

In this case, there is no follow-up entry in the journals to say what the problem was with the issue, nor the action taken, if any. 2nd Lt. Davenport of the 9th Cavalry was involved in several "Board of Inquiry" investigations and courts martial proceedings during the month of September, 1873.

This was typical of the 2nd Lt.'s during the 1800's. They were expected to do their Company duties as well as the other assigned tasks. This "kept them busy and wouldn't give them time to get into mischief".

This document was found in the "Special Orders", 1873 in Fort McKavett's Post Library and is available for anyone to research. All you have to do is contact Cody at the post for a time to come in and view these records.

Mess Hall Waiters

WAITERS.

There is no regular force of waiters. At meals each of the first sergeants of companies details a waiter for each table occupied by his company, whose duty it is to assist his comrades in obtaining food in addition to that served.

The waiters march in with their companies and leave the mess hall as soon as they have eaten their meals, and are required to do no other work about the establishment.

The non-commissioned officers in charge of the companies are held strictly accountable that the waiters perform their work with neatness and dispatch, and in order that the non-commissioned officers may give their men their strictest attention, they do not eat their meals until their companies

are through, and they have seen that the food is fairly and properly divided.

A certain decorum was expected of the enlisted men in the mess halls of any post. This entry comes out of the Cook's Manual of the U.S. Army and deals with the use of "Waiters". Not only were these meals supervised by the cooks and the first sgt.'s, but officers were expected to drop in and check on the welfare of their troops at any time and different meals.

DETAILS FOR SERVICE IN POST MESS.

The following details for service in a "Post Mess" have been found to be very satisfactory.

One officer.

One non-commissioned officer—steward.

One private as chief cook.

Two privates as assistant cooks.

Two privates, as kitchen police, from each organization; detailed for seven days, and to be excused from all company duties.

One private, as a waiter, to be detailed by first sergeants daily for each table occupied by their respective companies.

A list of the Duties for the Mess Hall

Site Hosts Returning to McKavett



Left: Roger and Carolyn McCartney will be our Site Hosts in March. They were of great help in previous year's West Texas Heritage Days and are back to help us with this year's event. Welcome back Roger and Carolyn and thanks for your help!



New Living History Rules in the Works

Texas Historical Commission is reworking our Living History Manual. A meeting was held in February in Austin and was attended by the Site Managers, Texas Parks and Wildlife, and John Cobb representing the Friends Groups. It looks like there will be no major changes, just streamlining our present rules and regulations for events. We will keep everyone informed as we get the new manual. Each site will have a copy and there will be one posted on the internet as well.



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Welcome New Site Employee



Brandon Halfmann

The Friends of Fort McKavett welcome our new Fort McKavett State Historic Site employee, Brandon Halfmann. Brandon lives in Wall (north of the site) where he grew up and graduated from high school. After graduating high school, he continued his education in San Angelo, at Angelo State University. He has degrees in History and Kinesiology that he earned while working various maintenance positions then full time at First Financial Bank in San Angelo.

Brandon's love of history and fascination with the United States in the late 19th Century will be an asset to the site.

We are excited to have Brandon join our family at Fort McKavett and look forward to his staying with us a long time. We look forward to working with Brandon and welcome him to our site.