

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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September, 2003

Docent Class to be held September 13-14

Fort McKavett State Historic Site will hold the first Docent Class in September. All persons who will be giving tours and presentations for the Fort will need to go through this class.

A second class will be offered in the Spring for those that cannot attend this meeting. This is an effort to come into compliance with TPWD Guidelines.

This does not affect Living History exhibits and exhibitors in our events. That program will continue like it has been over the years.

If you haven't signed up yet, contact John "Gabe" Schooley at the site as soon as possible. Housing and meals will be provided and there is no charge to attend. You will need to bring your uniform or vintage clothing for presentations.

Hospital Porch gets a Facelift

Our Park Rangers have been working on the porch around the Hospital. They have been replacing and repairing the porch boards and the support beams.

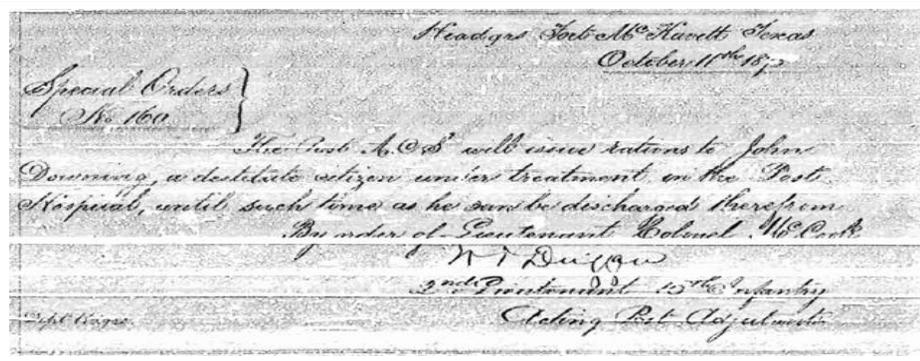
It is slow going because of some of the water damage and rot. They have had to replace pieces of the support beams and make some new posts.

On top of that, with temps over 100F, it gets pretty miserable, but it is well worth it. It is like standing on concrete now instead of the springboards that have been there for years.

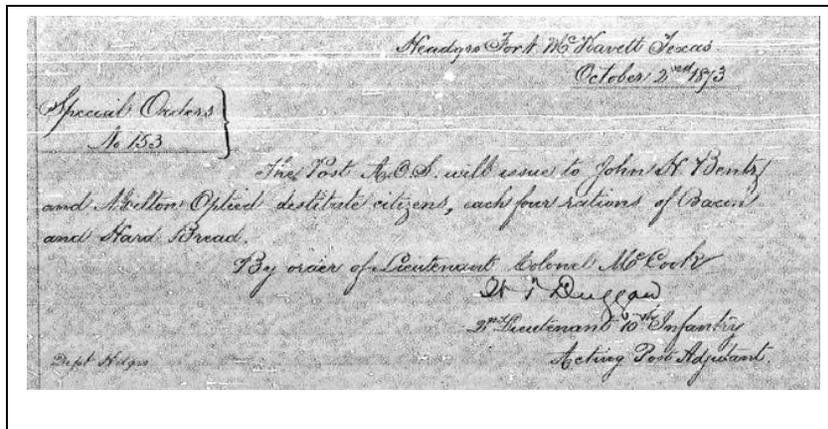


From the Archives

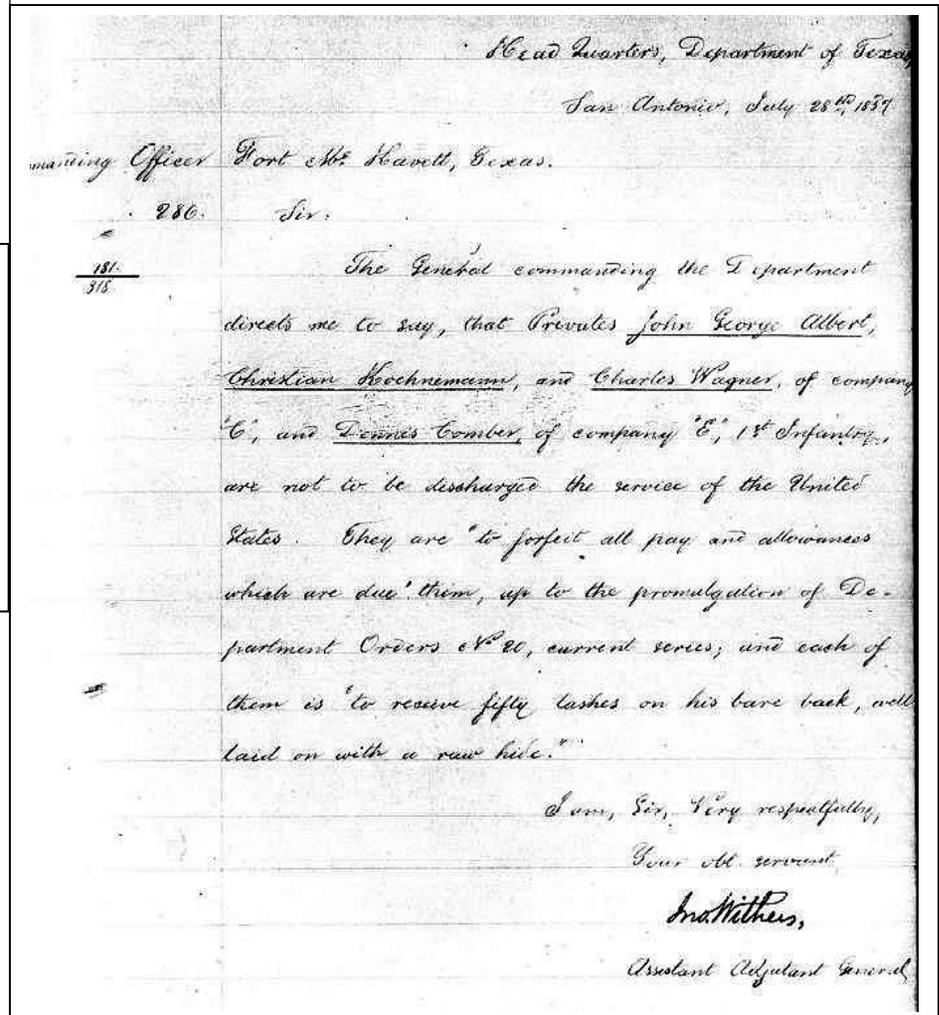
October of 1873 was a bad month for Civilians in the area of Fort McKavett. There are several notations in the "Special Orders" where rations and assistance (including hospitalization) were afforded destitute citizens.



Lt. Col. McCook of the 10th Infantry signed this special order to allow John Downing, a civilian rations while he was hospitalized in the Post Hospital at Fort McKavett on October 1873. He had signed another order on the 2nd of that month for citizens John H. Bentz and Milton Optied four rations of bacon and hard bread because they were destitute as well.



Harsh Treatment of Soldiers in 1857



Department of Texas Assistant Adjutant General had Pvt.'s John Albert, Christian Hochnemeur, and Charles Wagner of Company "C" and Dennis Comber of Company "E" of the 1st Infantry Regiment pay taken away and each to receive 50 lashes with a "raw hide" whip for their infractions of the rules. He did say they were not to be removed from the service. This was on July 28th, 1857. This sort of punishment was outlawed after the Civil War. Until then, it was a common practice for desertion or even talking about deserting your post.

Upcoming Events

September 13th-14th, Docent Training at Post
September 26th-27th, Fort Stockton
October 11th, Fort Davis
October 18th, Fort Lancaster
October 25, JSCAS Public Star Party
October 25, Friends of Fort McKavett Meeting
October 25, Fort McKavett reunion
November 8-11, Veterans Days Tours and Living History at Post
December 5-7, Christmas at Fort Concho

11/8-11/11, Veterans Days Tours and Living History at Post



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...

*Don't forget our Fort McKavett Reunion...if you can help, please come out and help take down the history of Fort McKavett, the town...
October 25, 2003*

Our New Exhibits

Texas Parks and Wildlife Department and Gabe Schooley, our Interpretive Specialist has been busy working on our new exhibits for visitors to the Post.

Great headway has taken place with the three Captains Quarters in the way of the addition of furniture and exhibits. There are more to add, but they are getting close to being ready by the target date of November and the Veterans Day Tours.

Quarters #10 now has a kitchen with wood burning stove and oven, servants quarters, and food displays.

The next step will be the curtains and rugs in these buildings to show how Captains lived in 1860-70 (#8), 1871-79 (#9), and 1880-83 (#10).

The Cavalry Barracks are complete now and look great. The display in the north end of barracks #4 shows the 4th U.S. Cavalry, Company "A" when they reopened the Post in 1868-1870 and again when they came back in 1874-75. This Company had 6 Medal of Honor holders on Post at the same time.

The south end of those barracks is being worked on to show Company "I" of the 24th Infantry. This was the home of the 24th and where they started.

The dead house now has a three-bed hospital ward and medical display to show how the hospital ward would have looked like. There are plans to open the "bath room" in the back of the Hospital building for a display of bathing the patients in the hospital would have had access to.

There has been a lot of research accomplished on these projects and more is underway. We are awaiting our latest CD with the National Archives records showing the 1880's use of the buildings and a list showing who was assigned to what quarters. *More on this in the next few months will be in your newsletter.*

Mission Statement for the Friends of Fort McKavett State Historic Site

The mission of the Friends of Fort McKavett State Historic Site, a non profit 501 (c) organization, is to assist in the operation, the receipt, solicitation, administration and disbursement of gifts, grants, bequests or other conveyances of real and personal property. The Friends of Fort McKavett State Historic Site will also assist with a volunteer program including labor, hosts, living history, and research through the Post Library for the benefit of the operation, maintenance and preservation of Fort McKavett State Historic Site and to provide information regarding the park and its resources to the public both on and off site.

Since we are requesting Grants for the Site, the Friends of Fort McKavett has to show our Mission Statement. This will be voted on during our Annual Meeting in October to be added into the By-Laws of the organization.

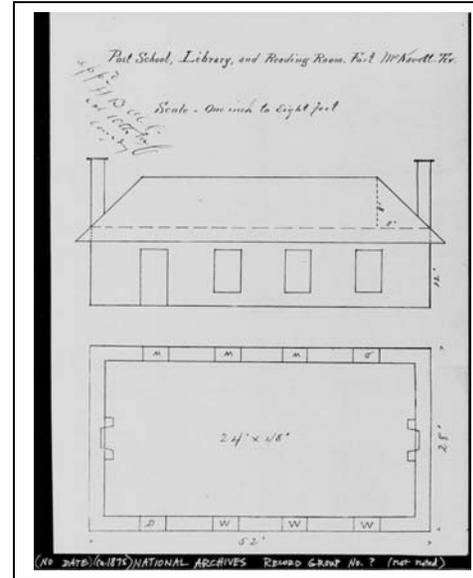
Update on the Cemetery

In the last few weeks, we received another set of documents on Fort McKavett from the records of the National Archives on CD. In reviewing these, in the middle of the quartermaster reports was a set of sheets showing the 1879 census of the Post Cemetery. The numbers of “unknowns” were off by seven extra over the 1883 War Department Inventory.

After investigating this, we found where in 1873, Fort McKavett removed 7 sets of remains from Fort Terrett (1852-1854) and moved them to our Cemetery as “unknowns”. These people were left here as well as our own.

Research has begun on the names of these soldiers (four have been found so far) by John Cobb, Frederica Wyatt, and Ephraim Dickson. Col. McTaggart has asked the VA to put our monument on hold until we find all their names so they may be added. We will keep you informed on this important research.

More on the Fort McKavett Schoolhouse



Left: 1875 Plans for the Schoolhouse at Fort McKavett

The School was used by soldiers only until 1878 when the Secretary of War ordered the school be opened to area children.

The question keeps coming up when the schoolhouse was first opened at Fort McKavett. The official plans and plats of the Site did not show it until 1883 and there was no Quartermaster Costs dedicated (from the Post records) to building a school. There were several high dollar “repairs to buildings” in the records in 1875. It is possible the money came from those expenditures.

A considerable quantity of rubbish, not offensive to the smell, unless fermentation or decomposition during the warm days, etc. in, when an unpleasant odor had been observed from it, provided a south-wind is blowing, has been thrown on the south-western side of the post, south of the new school house, and the quarters of A. A. Perry, J. A. Wolf, U.S.A., and within 300 yards of the post. It is recommended that all the combustible parts of these piles of rubbish, be burned up, and that no more garbage or rubbish of any sort whatever be allowed to be thrown at all on that side of the post.

In this November 1875 entry in the Post Medical Journal, mention is made of the use of the new Schoolhouse at Fort McKavett. So the building was built and opened in 1875.