

Where history happened

The most authentic tours in the history of America

September 2006



HistoryAmerica looks to the future

Just a few short weeks ago Pete and Julia Brown announced that this would be the last year for History America TOURS. Then the good news – Sharon McDermott, owner of Great American Tour Company, along with close friends Michael and Georgia O'Connor, decided

that HistoryAmerica was a wonderful organization and should have a future. The new owners are pleased and excited to acquire History America TOURS

from Pete and Julia Brown. As you know, the Browns have made HistoryAmerica a company with a superior reputation for providing historic tours that are fascinating, authentic, and enjoyable. These visits to our nation's historic and cultural sites have provided travelers with an educational and exciting understanding of our past.

The headquarters for History America TOURS will move to Rapid City, SD, when the new owners take control on January 1, 2007.

To insure a smooth transition, Pete Brown will continue working with HistoryAmerica in an advisory capacity, developing tours. His assistance and advice will assure travelers of the same exceptional attention to detail in planning and preparation that has always been the hallmark of History America.

2007 Tour List Announced!

SEE PAGE 3

The tour offerings for 2007 are on page three of this newsletter, and exact itineraries and prices will be available by late September 2006. You will note that many of the historians who have been an important part of History America will be doing tours again next year. Because this information was available in mid-August in an email newsletter, reservations have already started to arrive.

Please be assured that all the earned discounts and other incentives are still in place and will continue for travelers who have gone on previous tours.

October 2 - 8, 2006

The campaign of George Rogers Clark in the west during the American Revolution



George Rogers Clark often have been controversial, and their legacies misunderstood. George Rogers Clark is a perfect example. In February 1779, this heroic young commander led a small force of frontiersmen through the freezing waters of the Illinois country to British-held Fort Sackville at Vincennes. This was his most dramatic accomplishment, but Clark continued to fight for the American cause in the West during the entire War for Independence.

It was the second half of Clark's life, following the Revolution, that provided the decline of his fortunes and the controversial place in history he later assumed. *The Revolutionary War in the West: The Campaign of George Rogers Clark*, October 2-8, 2006, will deal with the Illinois campaign and much more. The tour will begin and end at the Great Falls of the Ohio River in Louisville, KY. At present there are 29 participants, and we expect the number to top out at about 35. Phil Waldron and Pete Brown will serve as tour directors and Henry Mattox is scheduled to drive. The event will be thoroughly scouted and well organized in the tradition of HistoryAmerica.

There are a number of sites on this tour

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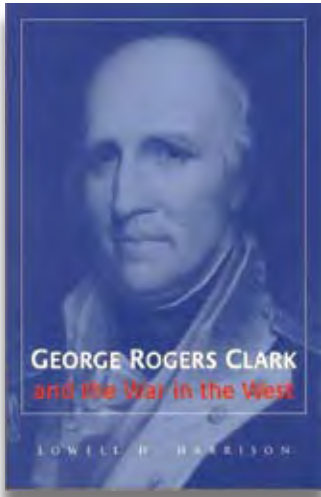
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HISTORIAN GUIDE

Jim Holmberg



BOOK NOTES



Much has been written about the famous conflicts and battlegrounds of the East during the American Revolution. Perhaps less familiar, but equally important and exciting, was the war on the western frontier, where Ohio Valley settlers fought for the land they had claimed—and for their very lives.

George Rogers Clark organized the local militias into a united front that would defend the western frontier from Indian attacks. Clark was one of the few people who saw the importance of the West in the Revolutionary War effort, and he persuaded Virginia's government to lend support to his efforts. Clark was able to cross the Ohio, saving that part of the frontier from further raids.

The author of *George Rogers Clark and the War in the West*, Lowell Harrison, captures the excitement of this vital part of American history while giving a complete view of Clark's significant achievements.

Harrison is a professor emeritus of history at Western Kentucky University and is the author or co-author of numerous books, including *Lincoln of Kentucky* and *A New History of Kentucky*.

In May 1884, ten prominent Louisvillians gathered at the home of Ruben T. Durrett and founded the Filson Historical Society. Kentucky's oldest, privately supported historical society was named to honor the state's first historian, John Filson. The society has grown through the years and now maintains four permanent collections to serve and educate the public: an extensive library, a magnificent manuscript collection, a sizeable photographs and prints collection and an enviable museum. The curator of the special collections at the Filson is none other than Historian Guide Jim Holmberg.

Jim was chosen to lead the George Rogers Clark tour for his proven people skills, which he demonstrated so ably on a Delta Queen cruise on the Ohio River. The 2004 cruise had a Lewis and Clark theme, and it drew rave reviews. Jim is a scholar of the 18th and 19th centuries in the Ohio River Valley and acclaimed for his research, publications and speaking skills. He will make this story come alive daily on the upcoming *Revolutionary War in the West* tour, October 2-8, 2006. The gathering place is the Galt House on the riverfront in Louisville. Call Julia to make your reservation at (800) 628-8542.

FEATURED TRAVELER



Mary Kuza

I feel as though I was born with the history gene for I've been interested for as long as I can recall. Over the last fifteen years, my prime focus has been on the Civil War, but it took a visit to Gettysburg in 1990 to have an epiphany of sorts while on a ranger walk. Since then I've studied the War and the people associated with it through books and travel, mainly with HistoryAmerica. I've been fortunate to be able to visit a great many historic sites and some out-of-the-way places with this company so devoted to authentic history, and to see the War through the eyes of some of our greatest historians.

It's been a wonderful eight years of travel with HistoryAmerica, and I've made several close friends along the way. I'm happy that the new owners will continue to keep the HistoryAmerica brand intact. With Pete Brown developing and scouting the tours, there should be exciting times ahead, and I fully intend to be a part of it!

George Rogers Clark, cont. from page 1 that will be first-time visits for HistoryAmerica. Fort Kaskaskia falls into this category. The village of Kaskaskia, IL, was founded as a missionary post by the Jesuits in 1703. French speaking settlers trickled in to the rich farmland and built the village around the location of the Jesuit Mission. An earthen redoubt, dubbed Fort Kaskaskia, was built on a bluff above the village sometime in the mid-1700s. On July 4, 1778, George Rogers Clark and his tiny force arrived at the fort. Clark and his men used Kaskaskia as their jumping-off place to capture Vincennes in 1779. We will be able to trace the remains of the redoubt, and Jim will give us the perspective of how the landforms have changed since Clark's day.

All of this adds up to an event that will far exceed expectations. Please consider joining us. The scenery will surprise you, and the camaraderie will delight you. Plus, you might learn something!

Getting to know the South Dakota HistoryAmerica Team



Sharon McDermott

Michael O'Connor

Georgia O'Connor

We want you to know us, and we hope that before long we will have an opportunity to meet all of you.

Sharon McDermott brings twenty-five years experience in the travel industry to HistoryAmerica. She became involved in cultural tourism in 1981 when employed with a firm that provided guides and sightseeing services to motor coach groups coming

to the Black Hills of South Dakota. She began her own company, Great American Tour Company, in 1992. Whereas her tours include scenic and cultural components, they have always had a strong historical element. It is a company the same size as History America with an emphasis on "great" rather than

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OUR 2007 SCHEDULE

TOURS

The Apache Wars

March 18-25

Historian Guide: Neil Mangum

Oliver Hazard Perry and the War of 1812

June 3-10

Historian Guide: Craig Symonds

Crazy Horse and Custer

July 8-15

Historian Guide: Neil Mangum

The Historical Black Hills

July 22-29

Historian Guide: Jack McDermott

TOURS

The Great Sioux Uprising

September 17-24

Historian Guide: Ed Bearss

The Best of Bearss in Chattanooga

September 25-October 2

Historian Guide: Ed Bearss

Antietam and Gettysburg

October 7-14

Historian Guide: Jim McPherson

CRUISES

Delta Queen Civil War Cruise

April 12-20

(New Orleans Roundtrip)

Delta Queen Civil War Cruise

May 17-24

(Birmingham-Chattanooga)

South Pacific WWII Cruise

November 12-28

Historian Guide: Ed Bearss

NOTE: Exact itineraries and prices will be available by late September 2006. HistoryAmerica is already accepting deposits to hold reservations on a first come-first served basis.



F E A T U R E D S I T E

This classic memorial stands on the site of Fort Sackville, commemorating the capture of the fort from the British by George Rogers Clark and his frontiersmen on February 25, 1779. The heroic march of Clark's men, in mid-winter from Kaskaskia on the Mississippi, and the subsequent victory over the British, remains one of the great feats of the American Revolution.



and Vincennes.

A proclamation in 1763 forbade the settlement of lands west of the Appalachian Mountains. The British sent Indian war parties against those settlers who ignored the proclamation.

Clark organized the Kentucky militia to defend against these raids. He decided that a major offensive campaign was needed. His plan was to lead a force of frontiersmen into the Illinois country and strike at the source of the Indian raids.

Determined to capture the fort, Clark and his force of approximately 170 Americans and Frenchmen made an epic 18-day trek from Kaskaskia through the freezing flood waters of the Illinois country. At times in icy water up to their shoulders, they arrived in Vincennes on February 23, 1779. The French citizens, eager to again renounce the British, warmly greeted Clark's men. The British garrison consisted of approximately 40 British soldiers and a similar number of French volunteers and militia from Detroit

Clark's men surrounded the fort and gave the impression of having a much larger army. The American soldiers, who were experienced woodsmen, maintained a rate of fire that convinced the British that the army was large in number.

British Lt. Gov. Henry Hamilton became resigned to surrendering. Hamilton attempted to obtain liberal conditions while Clark insisted on unconditional surrender. Hamilton reluctantly agreed to Clark's final terms. The surrender occurred at 10 a.m., Thursday, February 25, 1779.

The young Virginian had prevented the British from achieving their goal of driving the Americans from the Trans-Appalachian frontier. As a result of Clark's brilliant military activities, the British ceded to the United States a vast area of land west of the Appalachian Mountains. That territory now includes the states of Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, Wisconsin, and the eastern portion of Minnesota.

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"huge" and with the same emphasis on personalized service and attention to detail. Pete Brown describes Sharon well when he says she is "a soft spoken lady of firm convictions ... (who) does not take the new commitment lightly." Sharon is married to Jack McDermott who had a career in the National Park Service and is the author of ten books concerning western history and the Indian wars. He has often served as an Historian Guide for HistoryAmerica and will be the guide for the 2007 Historical Black Hills tour.

Michael O'Connor was a Captain in the Marine Corps in Viet Nam, a banker, and later, a lawyer. He is now a Magistrate Judge in the South Dakota Court System. He looks forward to retirement so that he can spend time with HistoryAmerica TOURS. In truth he would like to be

“a soft spoken lady of firm convictions...”

one of its frequent travelers, but says he'll help in any way possible. Michael has had a lifelong interest in the study of history and is particularly interested in military history. With his business major, his background in banking and in law, he has already been a valuable resource.

Georgia O'Connor is a retired mathematics teacher. She is a high energy person who gives each task that is before her 100%. For her this new adventure is a puzzle, and she's never seen a puzzle she didn't want to solve. She and Molly O'Connor Dailey (Georgia and Michael's daughter) are the two primary people in the organization who do administrative detail work. Georgia is a firm believer in the educational value of travel. She is excited at the prospect of working in this field, facilitating other people's enjoyment of learning and travel.

CALL PETE, JULIA, CHARLENE OR SHIELA TODAY TO MAKE YOUR BOOKING... (800) 628-8542



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