

Wilson's Creek National Battlefield Foundation 2025 Annual Report



PRESERVING OUR HISTORY FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE – GARY BISHOP



When I was a boy, perhaps 11 or 12 years old, I remember very well visiting Wilson's Creek Battlefield for the first time. On a lazy summer afternoon I was taken there by my late grandfather, Max Frink, who evidently wished for me to share with him an interest in the history of our region. In that, as in many things, he certainly succeeded.

In countless ways what we found that day at Wilson's Creek, more than half a century ago, was very much what you find there today. Peaceful hills, rolling pasture land, a meandering stream, and stands of oak, hickory and other timber native to the Ozarks. What we did not see that day was a gleaming Visitor's Center. There was no library, curated exhibits or artifacts. Only a single wide trailer, with a map on the wall and a very lonely park ranger who was quite eager to explain the battle, and to enjoy a little human interaction.

So fast forward more than 50 years. Now I am a grandfather myself, and was pleased to take my own grandchildren to Wilson's Creek on Independence Day this year. During our visit it occurred to me how ironic it is that the site of a cataclysmic battle is now a nature preserve and a peaceful, "happy place" for so many. That transformation, that reality, would not have been possible without the great work of the Wilson's Creek National Battlefield Foundation for more than 75 years. There remains much to do. It is my great honor and privilege to serve as President of so fine an organization. Please join with the Foundation to preserve this gem of the National Park Service, and to preserve the memory of those who waged the battle. Both you and those who follow after you will be glad you did.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE – MELISSA ADLER



The Power of Small Gifts

When community leaders set out to purchase the first 37 acres of Bloody Hill in 1950, they turned to the community and created the Penny Brigade. Schoolchildren were encouraged to join the effort, proving that even the smallest gifts could achieve something extraordinary. The organizers understood

that by involving children and families, they were building not just financial support, but a legacy of stewardship for generations to come.

That Same Spirit Continues Today

Last fall, with support from the Community Foundation of the Ozarks, the Foundation launched its own Penny Brigade. We mailed a commemorative calendar and invited our community to become new members or to return after some time away. The response was inspiring: more than 20 new members joined at the \$25 and \$50 levels, 15 new donors contributed to the annual campaign, and most of our current donors continued their steadfast support.

We are deeply grateful for everyone, longtime friends, and first-time donors alike, who shares in our mission to preserve and protect Wilson's Creek National Battlefield. As we celebrate our 75th anniversary, we reflect on the power of collective generosity and look ahead with pride and purpose. Together, we will continue to protect hallowed ground, support meaningful programs, and enhance the visitor experience for the next 75 years and beyond.

FOUNDATION BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND STAFF

Foundation Officers

Vice-President - Gary Bishop President - William Piston Secretary - Michael Hampton Treasurer - Brian Hickman

Board Members

Steve Bach	Nicholas Inman	Crystal Sharp
Laurence Bryan	Rob Jones	Noah Snelson
Sandra Byrd	Whitney Morrow	Mark Whisler
Garin Ferguson	David K. Olive	

Staff Member

Executive Director - Melissa Adler

NPS Liaison

Superintendent - Sarah Cunningham

Committee Chair Persons

Bylaws
Gary Bishop

Events and Fundraising
Steve Bach

Website
Mark Whisler



Wilson's Creek National Battlefield Foundation Mission Statement

Support Wilson's Creek National Battlefield in partnership with the National Park Service by preserving Civil War history, acquiring and safeguarding relevant properties and materials, and promoting the park through fundraising, volunteerism, education, advocacy, and research.

YOUR IMPACT

With the help of donors like you, the Foundation purchased and donated a rare carte-de-visite to the Battlefield Museum collection.

Friedrich (Frederick) Salomon (1826-1897) was born in Saxony (part of Prussia) and came to America in 1848. He settled in Manitowoc, Wisconsin, and when the Civil War began became a captain in the 5th Missouri Infantry (US), a regiment commanded by his brother Charles. Both men fought at Wilson's Creek, then Frederick became colonel of the 9th Wisconsin Infantry.

Promoted to brigadier general of volunteers, he led Union troops at the battles of Newtonia, Missouri (September 1862), Helena, Arkansas (July 1863) and Jenkins' Ferry, Arkansas (April 1864). He ended the Civil War as a brevet major general. After serving as surveyor general of the Utah Territory, Salomon died in Salt Lake City and was buried there.



CDV of soldier Frederick C. Salomon

FOUNDATION SUPPORTED PROGRAMS AND EVENTS

The Foundation supported these programs and events in the 2024-25 fiscal year.

Battle Anniversary - August 10, 2024



Executive Director, Melissa Adler, Outgoing Board President, Crystal Sharp and Park Superintendent, Sarah Cunningham

Photo by: NPS/Emma Nolan

Memorial Luminary - November 15, 2024



Members Gathering - August 9, 2024



Star Party - October 5, 2024



Melissa Adler and Volunteer Wesley Cooper

Bark in the Park - May 31, 2025



Photo by: Wilson's Creek National Battlefield

Junior Ranger Day
May 31, 2025



Photo by: Wilson's Creek National Battlefield

Park Day sponsored by American Battlefield Trust
May 10, 2025



Summer Camp - June 2-6, 2025



— **Newtonia Battlefields Protection Association Appreciation Dinner - June 11, 2025** —



Former Senator, Roy Blunt, Melissa Adler and Former Springfield Mayor, Ken McClure

FOUNDATION EVENTS THAT RAISED MONEY AND AWARENESS FOR THE BATTLEFIELD

Missouri Cherry Blossom Festival Lunch
April 25, 2025



2025 Hill Day hosted by National Park Foundation
April 30, 2025



Rep. Eric Burlison

Mary Abroe, American Battlefield Trust
July 8, 2025



Mary Abroe (second from right)

— **Celebrate 75 Gala - June 7, 2025** —



Springfield Mayor, Jeff Schrag



Keynote Speaker, Michael Price



Superintendent, Sarah Cunningham



Board President, Gary Bishop

2024-2025 ANNUAL CAMPAIGN DONORS

We deeply appreciate the generous individuals, businesses, and foundations who supported the foundation in this milestone 75th anniversary year. Their commitment strengthens the foundation's capacity to support programs, acquire valuable artifacts, advocate for the park, and contribute to vital land preservation efforts, especially during these challenging times for our national parks.

Below, you will find a listing of our esteemed donors for the fiscal year spanning August 2024 to July 2025. It is through the unwavering financial support of these dedicated patrons that we can make the greatest contribution to Wilson's Creek National Battlefield and continue preserving this hallowed ground for future generations.

PLATINUM

(gifts of \$5,000 and above)

John Harris

Mr. John Nau III

Karen Sweeney

GOLD

(gifts of \$2,500 to \$4,999)



Pea Ridge National Military Park Foundation

Tal and Rosalie O'Reilly Wooten Family Foundation

SILVER

(gifts of \$1,000 to \$2,499)



Charlie and Mary Beth O'Reilly
Family Foundation

Mary Abroe

Nancy Ingrisano
Robert and Barbara Kipfer
Thomas and Evelyn Mangan

Christina Moore
William and Nancy Piston

BRONZE

(gifts of \$500 to \$999)

National Park Friends Alliance



William and Virginia Darr
Marianne Dee Dosch

Brian and Brandy Hickman
McQueary Family

COPPER

(gifts of \$250 to \$499)

Civil War Roundtable of the Ozarks
Worldwide Promotional Products
Gary and Jennifer Bishop
Laurence and Diana Bryan
Charlotte Buckingham

David and Sandra Byrd
David and Mary Christiano
Thomas Doneker
Ted and Rachel Hillmer
Christopher and Susan Jones

Maurice Joe Martinez
James McKay
Mark and Karen Perreault
David Snoke
William T. Wayne

Other Donors

(gifts of \$100 to \$249)

3rd Louisiana Historical Association
Daughters of Union Veterans, Mary
Whitney Phelps Tent 22
Paul and Melissa Adler
Leslie Cantrell
Russell Gaddie
Vicki Good

Larry Henry
Dennis Hood
Nicholas and Sarah Inman
Tom and Tammy Mast
Tim and Roberta Montgomery
Whitney Morrow
David K. and Madeline Olive

Steve and Corine Ross
Mike and Annette Russ
Cynthia Schowengerdt
Crystal Sharp
Michael Sheriff
Noah and Laura Snelson

Mistakes and omissions are sincerely regrettable and can be reported to madler@wilsonscreek.com.

Statement of Cash Receipts and Disbursements - Year Ended July 31, 2025

Receipts

Donations	\$38,094
Memberships	\$3,400
Book and Print Sales	\$671
Fundraising Events.	\$17,077
Investment Income	\$13,733
Total Receipts	\$72,975

Disbursements

Salaries and Payroll Taxes	\$51,439
Office Expenses and Insurance.	\$6,414
Printing and Postage	\$2,403
Sponsorships and Promotions.	\$277
Special Events	\$2,409
Youth Summer Camp Program	\$4,015
Donations to the NPS	\$973
Total Disbursements	\$67,930

Net change in cash and investments	\$5,045
Cash and investments, beginning of year	\$553,440
Cash and investments, end of year	\$558,485

Summary - Cash and Investments

Unrestricted.	\$19,677
Temporarily restricted / Board-designated	\$220,522
Permanently restricted	\$318,286
Balance (on 7/31/25)	\$558,485

THE BATTLE TO PRESERVE WILSON'S CREEK

On September 5, 1950, the Wilson's Creek Battlefield Foundation was chartered for the purpose of creating a national park to preserve the site of the Battle of Wilson's Creek.

Dr. Lewis E. Meador, professor of political science at Drury College, served on the steering committee made up of members from the Foundation, the Chamber of Commerce, the American Legion, the Greene County Historical Society, and the Jaycees. It organized in 1951 to guide the necessary legislation through Congress. Longtime writer and reporter for Springfield Newspapers Inc., Lucile Morris Upton, used her popular "The Good Old Days" column to advocate for national park status.

The foundation raised \$2,165 to purchase 37 acres on "Bloody Hill," mostly from small donors, including schoolchildren who participated in the Penny Brigade. The Foundation wanted buy-in from the community and a sense of ownership, so they encouraged families to get involved.

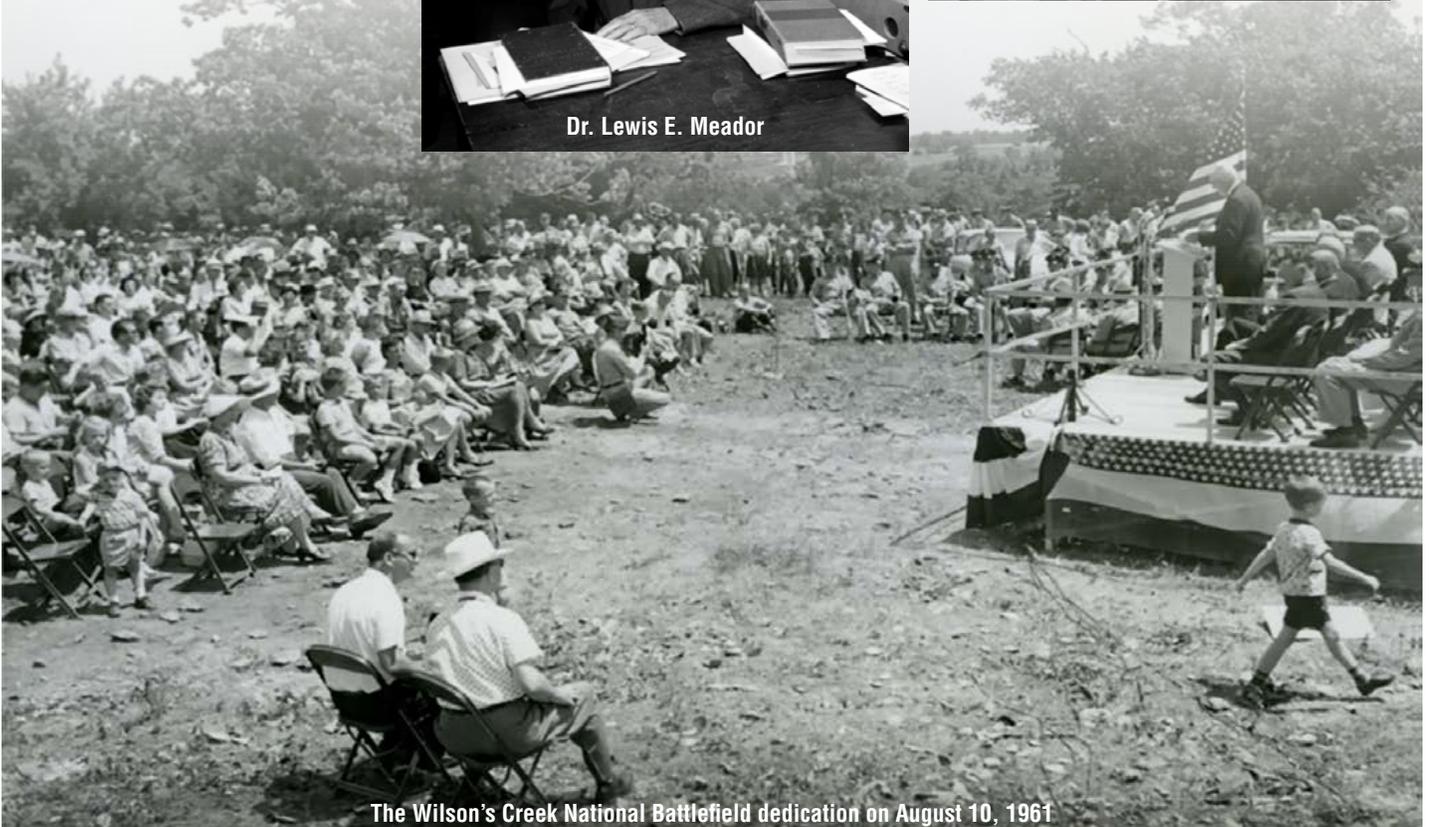
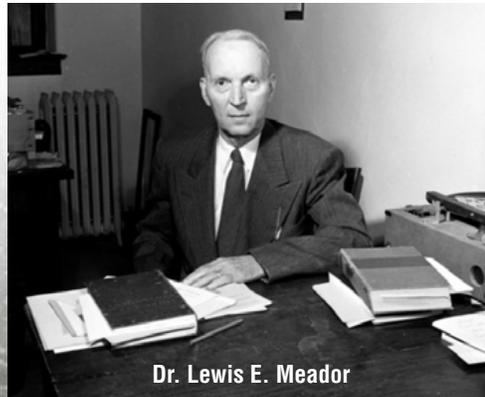
Finally, there was success. President Dwight D. Eisenhower signed legislation creating Wilson's Creek National Battlefield Park on April 22, 1960. The official transfer of the land happened on August 10, 1961, timed with the 100th anniversary of the battle.

The Foundation has an impressive history of supporting projects such as:

- Restoration of the Edwards Cabin
- Interpretive Film at the Visitor Center
- Acquisition of John K. and Ruth L. Hulston library collection
- 150th Anniversary Reenactment
- Preservation of 60 acres of Sigel's First Position
- Acquisition of a rare .44 caliber Model 1860 Henry rifle

We're not finished!

We have much to do to preserve the cultural landscape, artifacts, and stories of Wilson's Creek and the Trans-Mississippi Theater. Please consider supporting our mission during this milestone anniversary year.





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 [instagram.com/wilsonscreekfoundation](https://www.instagram.com/wilsonscreekfoundation)

 [WilsonsCreekNationalBattlefield](https://www.facebook.com/WilsonsCreekNationalBattlefield)

Front Cover: Cannons at Tour Road Stop Five

Above: Wilson's Creek at Sunset

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