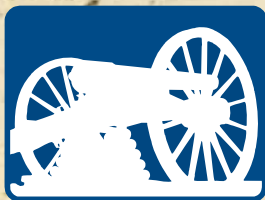


Wilson's Creek National Battlefield Foundation 2023 Annual Report



Wilson's Creek
National Battlefield
Foundation

PRESERVING OUR HISTORY FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Greetings, Wilson's Creek National Battlefield Foundation Supporters!

As we roll into the fall months, we can take some time to reflect on the year and be grateful for all that we have accomplished at the Foundation. Through the support of our members and sponsors, we purchased a rare collection of documents on the civilian life

and military career of James Edge and acquired an artillery shell jacket for the "Arming the Trans-Mississippi" exhibit at the visitor center.

Along with artifact acquisitions, we continue to support park events such as the Memorial Luminary Tour, the Annual Star Party, and Arts in the Parks. The Foundation additionally continues to provide educational opportunities such as the Summer Camp, and what a year it was with two weeks filled with wide-eyed children learning about the history of

the park! The summer would not be complete without the Ray House Jamboree, a well-attended event where families gather to hear period music.

This has been a year of change with the retirement of our long-time staff members April McDonough and Roseann Blunt. I want to thank them again for all the time they dedicated to the Foundation's mission. The Foundation would not be what it is today without their service. The focus of the Foundation's work will continue with our new Executive Director, Melissa Adler, and the Board is genuinely excited for her to assist in leading the Foundation into a new era.

The Foundation is near and dear to my heart, and I am truly thankful for the opportunity to work alongside such a talented group of individuals who make up our Board of Directors. The value of being a part of an organization that is helping to preserve our history is extraordinary. I invite you to visit Wilson's Creek National Battlefield soon and continue to be a part of the Foundation's mission to help protect this piece of history located in the heart of our community!

SUPERINTENDENT'S MESSAGE



While writing the year in review can sometimes be a challenge, it is also an incredible opportunity to reflect on the successes of the past year. I find that we often accomplish more and provide a higher level of positive and quality service for our community and beyond than we realize.

In calendar year 2022 Wilson's Creek's visitation was just

shy of 283,000. We expect similar statistics for 2023. Last January the battlefield stopped charging entrance fees. There were a few adjustments that came with this, but overall, it has made a positive impact with reaching more visitors to experience the park.

We filled four critical positions this year: 1. a Supervisory Park Ranger who manages visitor operations, including educational programs; 2. a Supervisory Protection Park Ranger who ensures the resources and people are safe; 3. a Protection Park Ranger who is currently in an intensive training program; 4. an Administrative Officer who manages all things administrative, including budget and human

resources. We also saw the retirement of long-standing employee Chief of Resources and Facilities Gary Sullivan after 30+ years of service to the NPS!

Other highlights include conducting several archeological surveys on lands the Foundation helped purchase as well as conservation treatment on historic flags and the Samuel Curtis Coat. This year the Foundation purchased and donated other artifacts to the collection; several have been on temporary display. Work on the Ray House to replace and repaint damaged clapboard siding and porch decking will be completed this fall.

Our staff provided many interpretive programs, including the favorites artillery demonstrations and Arts in the Parks. We reinvigorated and reimagined the Luminary and Moonlight Tour into one new event which received great feedback. We expanded programming to reach new audiences through the Bark Ranger and Night Sky programs!

One other major change that has been ongoing is the construction of the roundabout at Farm Road 182 and State Highway ZZ. Once completed, we expect the intersection near the entrance of the battlefield to be much safer.

We look forward to another successful year at the battlefield and hope you come visit again soon!



Wilson's Creek
National Battlefield
Foundation

Wilson's Creek National Battlefield Foundation Mission Statement

To work in cooperation with and to support the Wilson's Creek National Battlefield, a unit of the National Park Service and its staff. To further, by all proper and legitimate agencies and means, the acquisition of Civil War historical properties and materials, especially those related to the Battle of Wilson's Creek or usable in the interpretation of the Wilson's Creek battle. To be a friend of the park whose primary purpose is to support Wilson's Creek National Battlefield in a partnership through activities which may include fundraising, volunteerism, education, advocacy, and research.

THE BATTLE TO PRESERVE WILSON'S CREEK

Established in 1950, the Wilson's Creek National Battlefield Foundation, a nonprofit corporation with IRS 501(c)(3) status, is among the earliest private sector supporters of the National Park Service. Members contribute through annual donations and volunteer engagement to aid the National Park Service at Wilson's Creek National Battlefield. Membership is open to individuals and corporations.

The Foundation's mission, rooted in its purchase of 37 acres on Bloody Hill,

is the preservation and protection of the park. Its overarching aim is to heighten awareness and appreciation of this national treasure, catering to historians and outdoor enthusiasts.

The Foundation serves as the fundraising arm of Wilson's Creek National Battlefield and secures funds for projects beyond the park's federal budget. Past endeavors encompass furnishing the Ray House, purchasing cannon carriages, installing a visitor center video system, acquiring the John K. and Ruth L. Hulston

library collection, and organizing battle reenactments.

Notably, the library annex education center and the visitor center's recent renovation was possible through Foundation efforts and government grants. Current projects are land preservation to protect the battlefield's rural character and the expansion of educational programs. Explore ways to give at wilsonscreek.com/preservation.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE



With great enthusiasm and a deep sense of responsibility, I'm writing to you as the new Executive Director of the Wilson's Creek National Battlefield Foundation. I am honored to have the opportunity to lead this incredible organization.

First and foremost, I would like to express my sincere gratitude for your steadfast

support of our mission to bring history to life, safeguard the hallowed ground, and preserve America's heritage for generations to come. Your generosity has assisted with protecting the incredible history and natural beauty of Wilson's Creek National Battlefield.

I want to personally thank the Foundation's two longtime employees who retired this year. April McDonough, who served as Executive Director, joined the Foundation in 2002. Roseann Blunt, Finance Director, served the Foundation for 26 years. I look forward to building on their many achievements.

FOUNDATION BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND STAFF

Foundation Officers

Vice-President - Bill Piston President - Crystal Sharp
Secretary - Gary Bishop Treasurer - Brian Hickman, CPA

Board Members

Steve Bach Garin Ferguson Steve Ross
Sandra Byrd Michael Hampton Mike Ussery
John Elkins Nicholas Inman Mark Whisler

Staff Member

Executive Director - Melissa Adler

NPS Liaison

Superintendent - Sarah Cunningham

Committee Members

Publications
Steve Ross

Website
Mark Whisler

YOUR IMPACT - THE JAMES EDGE PAPERS

Donors play a pivotal role in acquiring artifacts that enable the preservation of history and foster a more comprehensive understanding of the Civil War. Recently, the Wilson's Creek National Battlefield Foundation made a significant acquisition by purchasing five original documents about James Edge, a formerly enslaved man who enlisted in the Union Army in Springfield, Missouri.

Rare Documents

Individual documents related to African American soldiers are rare, and those associated with Missouri African American troops are even scarcer. Groupings of documents connected to a single African American Missouri Union soldier are exceptionally rare. These invaluable documents will become permanent additions to the collections at Wilson's Creek National Battlefield and the Civil War Virtual Museum.

James Edge

In 1855, a ten-year-old child named James was tragically separated from his family and sold at auction, possibly to settle his owner's debts. Martin D. Edge purchased James, and he became known as James Edge. Nine years later, at the age of 19, James enlisted in the Union Army in Springfield, thus gaining his freedom.

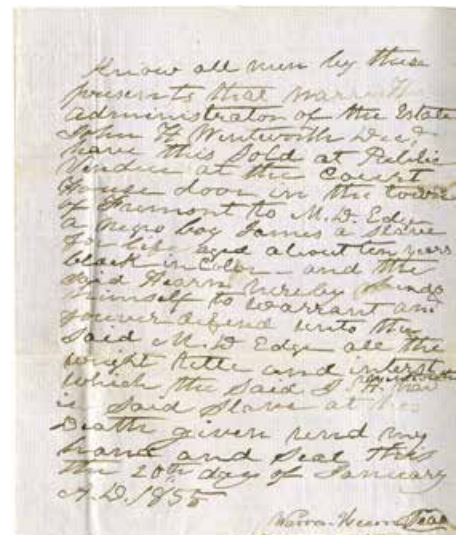
These five documents shed light on the civilian life and military career of James Edge. He was born in Bates County, Missouri, and enlisted in the Union Army on January 5, 1864. Sadly, he succumbed to disease in Port Hudson, Louisiana, that April while serving with the 67th U.S. Colored Infantry.

Emancipation Proclamation

President Abraham Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation on January 1, 1863, which declared the freedom of all enslaved individuals within secessionist states. However, Missouri, as a border state that remained in the Union, continued to practice slavery.



A document from the Office of the Provost Marshal of the Southwest District of Missouri, certifying the enlistment of James Edge into the Union Army at Springfield, Missouri, on January 5, 1864.



A legal bill of sale dated January 20, 1855, detailing the transfer of James as a slave to M. D. Edge. The document describes him as "a Negro boy James a slave for life aged about ten years."

COLORED VOLUNTEER DESCRIPTIVE LIST of James Edge Colored Volunteers, enlisted in the service of the United States under General Order, No. 135, Head Quarters, Department of the Mo., St. Louis, November 14th, 1863. Claimed to have been the slave of M. D. Edge a citizen of Osage County, State of Missouri.

Name	Description						Where Born		Enlisted			
	YEARS OF AGE	FEET	HAIL	COMPLEXION	HAIR	EYES	State	County	When	Where	By whom	Period
<u>James Edge</u>	<u>20</u>	<u>5 1/2</u>	<u>W</u>	<u>W</u>	<u>W</u>	<u>W</u>	<u>Missouri</u>	<u>Bates</u>	<u>1864</u>	<u>Springfield</u>	<u>Provo</u>	<u>31 days</u>

I CERTIFY, on Oath, that I have carefully examined the above named Colored Volunteer, agreeably to the General Regulations of the Army, and that, in my opinion, he is free from all bodily defects and mental infirmity that would, in any way, disqualify him from performing the duties of a soldier.

I CERTIFY, on Oath, that the above named Colored Volunteer was duly enlisted by me, and that the above is his correct Descriptive List. That I have carefully inspected him previous to his enlistment, and that he was entirely sober when enlisted; and that, in accepting him as duly qualified to perform the duties of an able-bodied soldier, I have strictly observed the Regulations which govern the recruiting service.

W. B. Wooster
Surg. 1st Cong. Dist. Mo.
Examining Surgeon.

Notice Springfield Mo
Date January 5 1864

O. M. Newberry
Major, Provost Marshal and Recruiting Officer.

This slave was presented for enlistment by M. D. Edge.

A "Colored Volunteer Descriptive List" providing a physical description of James Edge, dated January 5, 1864.

Enlistment and Freedom

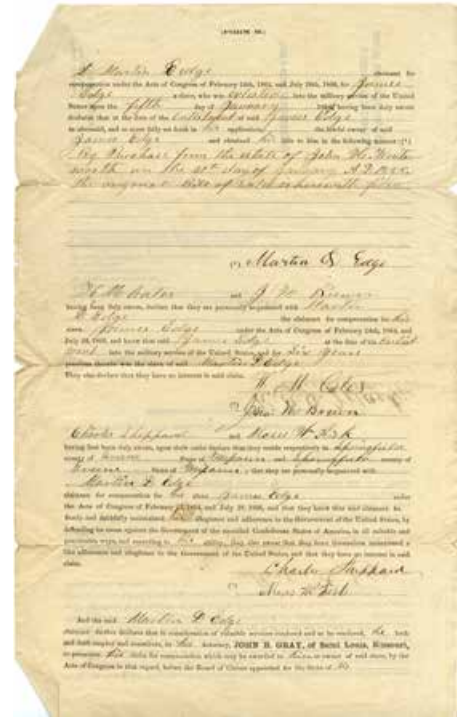
The Proclamation marked the acceptance of Black men into the Union Army and Navy. The legislation authorizing the formation of the U.S. Colored Troops (USCT) stipulated that no man could serve as a slave. Therefore, for individuals like James in border states, enlistment represented their pathway to freedom. By the conclusion of the Civil War, nearly 200,000 Black soldiers and sailors had fought for the Union and their liberation.

Military Units

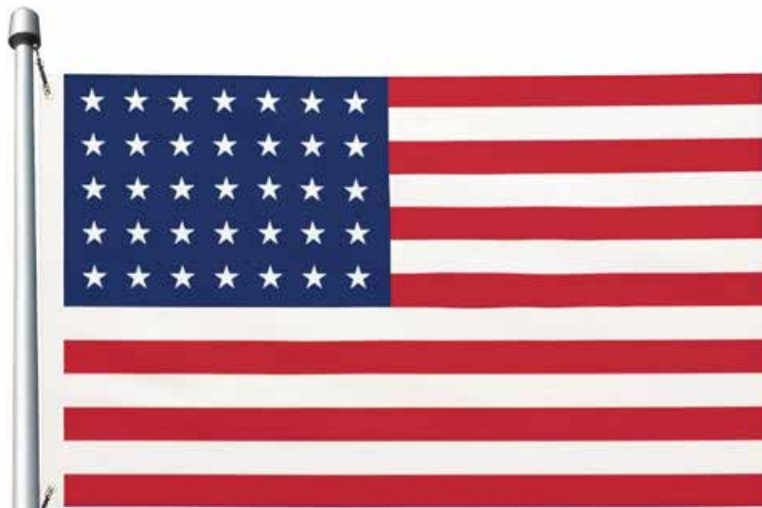
The 3rd Missouri Colored Infantry Regiment, organized at Benton Barracks in St. Louis, Missouri, during the winter of 1863–1864, saw its designation changed to the 67th Regiment United States Colored Troops on March 11, 1864.

Attached to the Department of Missouri until March 1864, the regiment later served in the District of Port Hudson, Louisiana, under the Department of the Gulf until June 1864. The regiment’s journey included movements from Benton Barracks, Missouri, to Port Hudson, Louisiana, arriving on March 19, 1864, where they remained on duty until June.

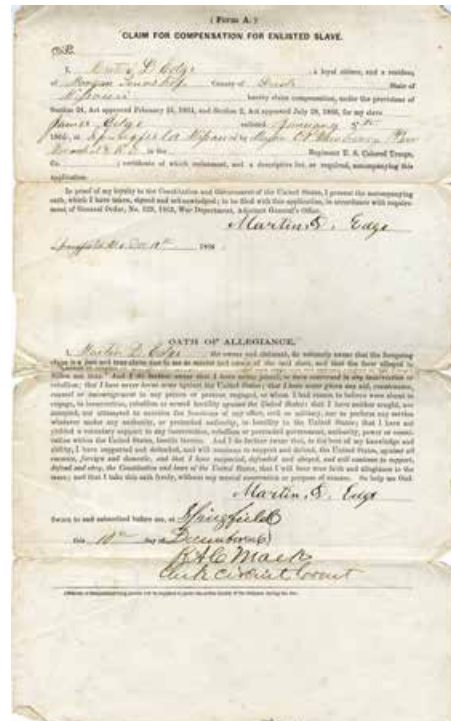
They subsequently relocated to Morganza, Louisiana, and continued their service until June 1865, with notable actions, such as action at Mt. Pleasant Landing, Louisiana, May 15, 1864, and the expedition from Morganza to Bayou Sara on September 6–7, 1864. Finally, they returned to Port Hudson on June 1, 1865, and consolidated with the 65th Regiment, United States Colored Troops, on July 12, 1865.



A claim for compensation from Martin D. Edge to the federal government due to James' enlistment in the Union Army, referencing the January 20, 1855, bill of sale. Congress passed two acts in 1864 and 1866 allowing enslavers to claim compensation for enslaved people who joined the U.S. military, with potential rewards of up to \$300 for enlistees.



Flag of the United States 1863-1865



A compensation claim by Martin D. Edge dated December 10, 1866, includes his oath of allegiance to the United States.

All document images courtesy of the Local History Department, Springfield-Greene County Public Library

THE YEAR IN REVIEW



18th Annual Memorial Luminary Tour
November 5, 2022
Commemorating the 2,539 casualties suffered at
the Battle of Wilson's Creek

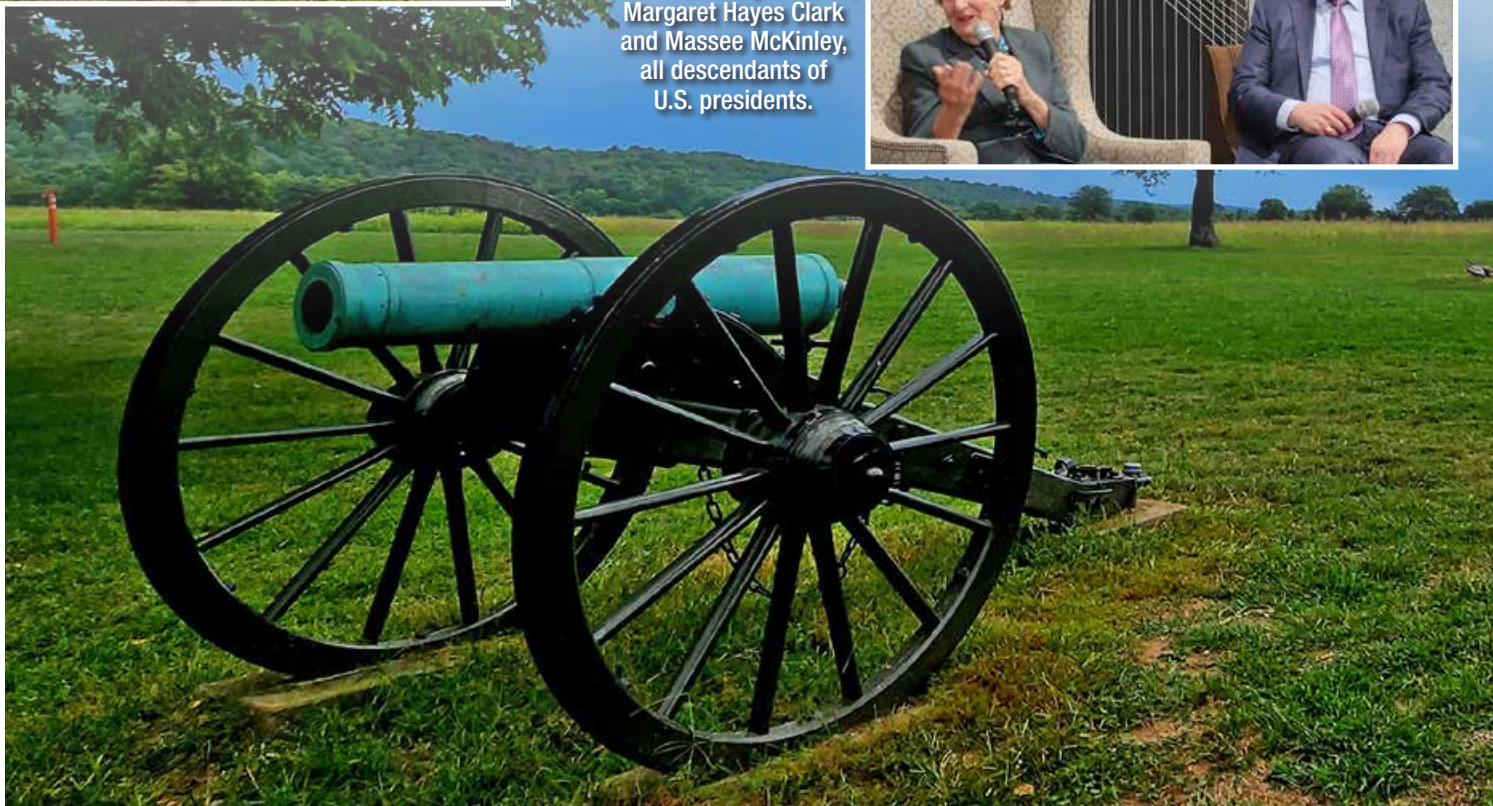


**161st Anniversary of the
Battle of Wilson's Creek**
August 10, 2022

**Luncheon benefitting the foundation, April 28, 2023, at the
18th Annual Missouri Cherry Blossom Festival**



Dr. William Piston
interviews Jay Garfield,
Margaret Hayes Clark
and Masee McKinley,
all descendants of
U.S. presidents.



Ray House Jamboree and Living History Day, June 10, 2023



Arts in the Park
Free concerts every Saturday evening in May 2023

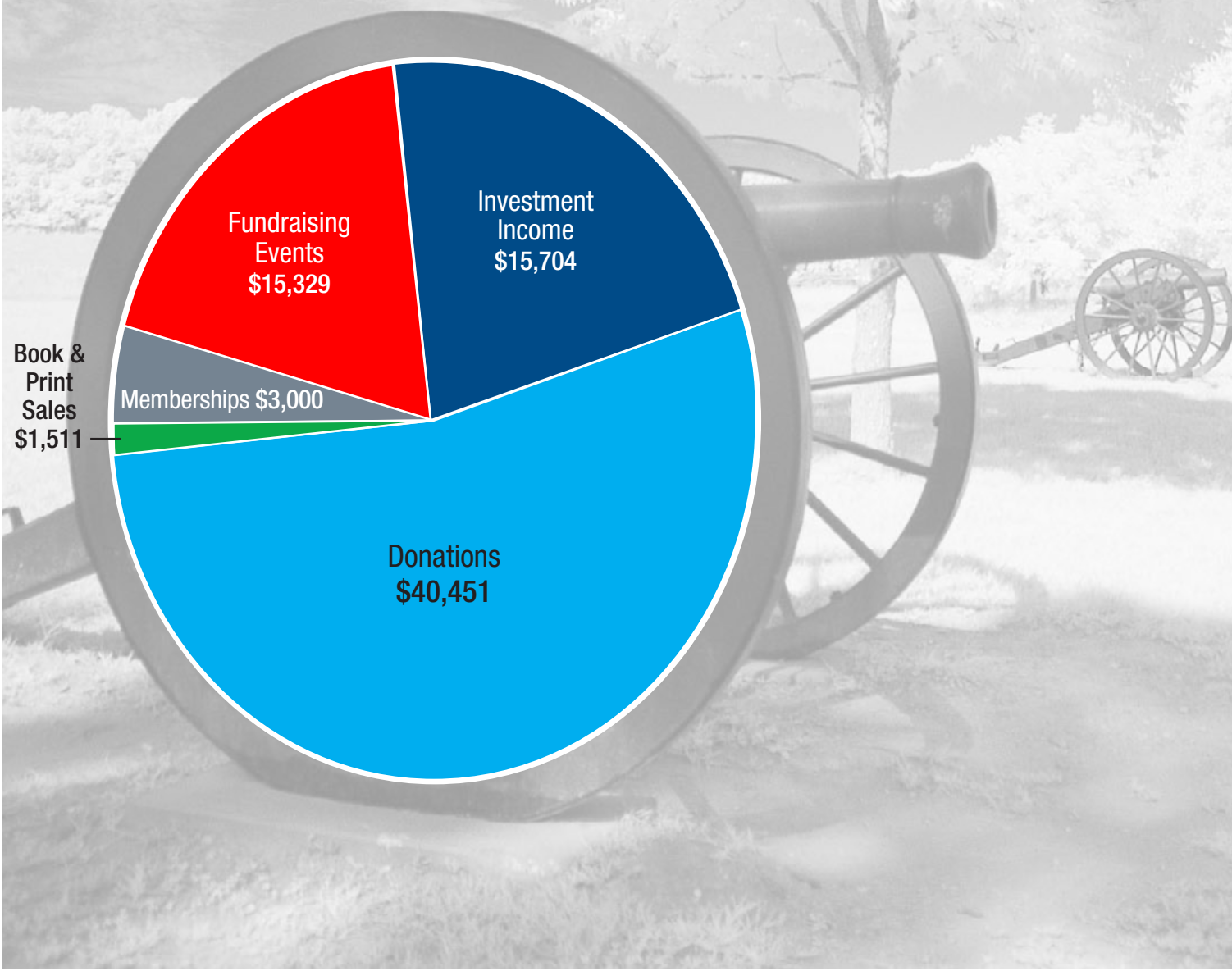


Summer Camp
June 12-16 and June 19-23, 2023



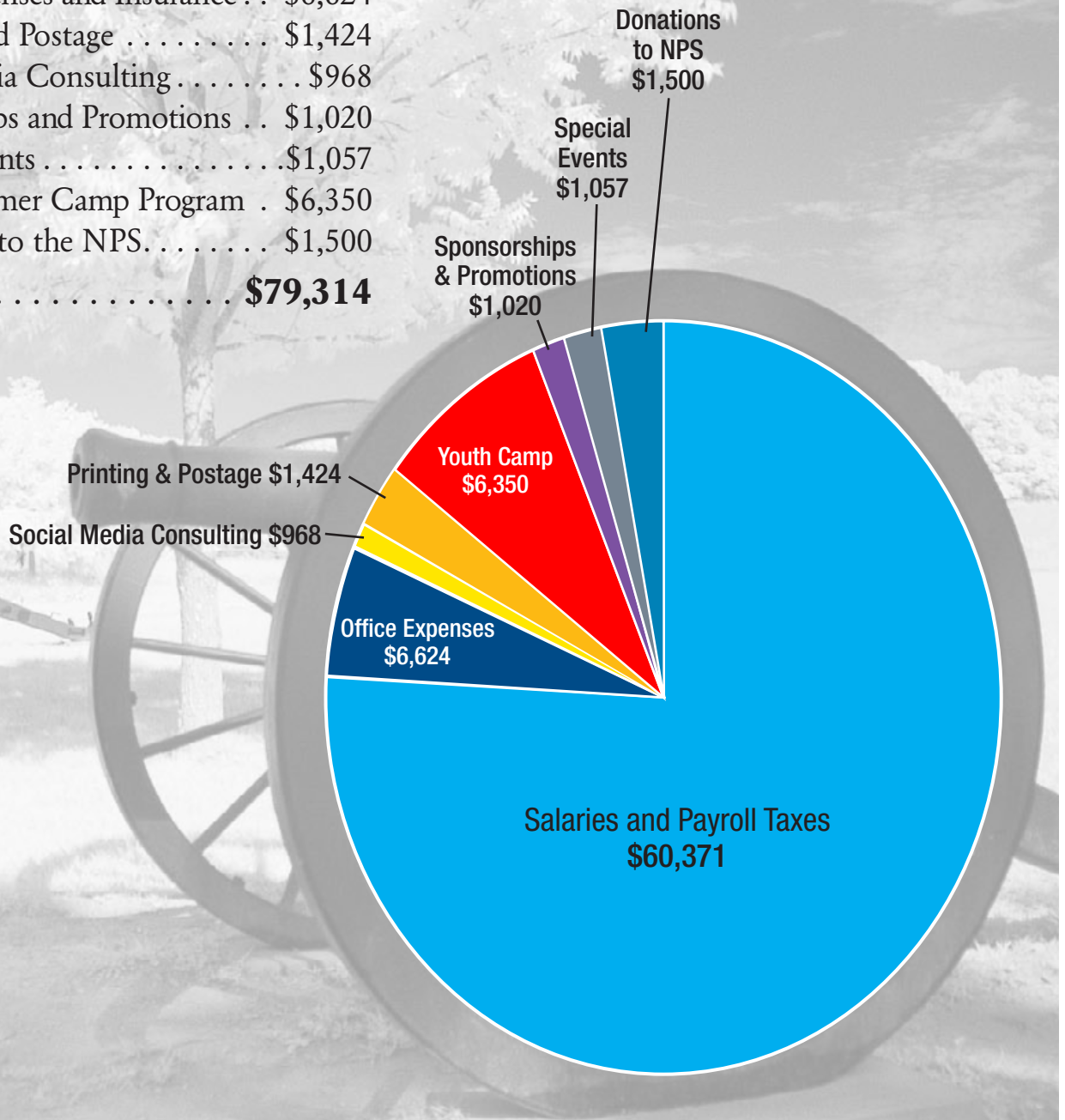
REVENUE

Donations	\$40,451
Memberships	\$3,000
Book and Print Sales	\$1,511
Fundraising Events	\$15,329
Investment Income	\$15,704
Total	\$76,085



EXPENSES

Salaries and Payroll Taxes	\$60,371
Office Expenses and Insurance . .	\$6,624
Printing and Postage	\$1,424
Social Media Consulting	\$968
Sponsorships and Promotions . .	\$1,020
Special Events	\$1,057
Youth Summer Camp Program .	\$6,350
Donations to the NPS	\$1,500
Total	\$79,314



PAST FOUNDATION PROJECTS

Since its establishment in 1950, the Wilson's Creek National Battlefield Foundation has steadfastly pursued its mission to preserve the hallowed grounds of Wilson's Creek, where more than 17,000 soldiers clashed on a scorching August day in 1861. The Foundation's early preservation efforts have spawned a range of projects over the years, encompassing the restoration of the historic Ray House, the construction of picnic pavilions, the meticulous reconstruction of historic structures, financing for a new interpretive film, and the expansion of the visitor center with an 8,000-square-foot addition, which now serves as both educational space and home to the Hulston Research Library. More recently, the Foundation's endeavors have extended to land acquisitions surrounding the battlefield, intended to safeguard its viewshed and preserve the park's historical authenticity.



Visitor Center Renovation in 2020

The comprehensive renovation undertaken in 2020 has addressed several critical needs. It has provided essential curatorial space to accommodate the park's extensive collection of artifacts, effectively doubled the available exhibit space, and upgraded the visitor center's heating and air conditioning systems, thereby ensuring the preservation of artifacts while enhancing the overall visitor experience.



150th Wilson's Creek Anniversary Reenactment

This three-day spectacle held August 12–14, 2011 attracted over 3,000 reenactors hailing from all corners of the nation, and it captivated an audience of more than 50,000 spectators. The event not only featured realistic battle reenactments such as “the fight in the cornfield” and “the fight for bloody hill” but also included a period wedding, military ball, 1860s baseball game, church service, and duel. Attendees were treated to demonstrations of period crafts, old-time peace fair games for children, authentic Civil War sutlers, period music, and modern food vendors.



Interpretive Film at the Visitor Center in 2007

The creation of this new film, funded by the Wilson's Creek National Battlefield Foundation with generous financial support from BNSF Railway, recounts the gripping narrative of the Battle of Wilson's Creek—an early conflict of the Civil War and the first engagement to occur west of the Mississippi River. Produced by Wide Awake Films of Kansas City, Missouri, the film was shot on location, featuring scenes that required the participation of more than 100 Civil War reenactors and living historians donned in authentic period attire, as well as 30-40 horses for the cavalry sequences and firing weapons and artillery.



Restoration of the Edwards Cabin in 2005

On August 6, 1861, Major General Sterling Price established his Missouri State Guard headquarters near the residence of William Edwards. Just four days later, during a breakfast attended by Price and General McCulloch, the Union Army launched a surprise attack.

Over the next six hours, the battle raged through the once-tranquil valley of Edwards' Homestead. Although it withstood the relentless onslaught of battle, the original cabin was subsequently abandoned by the Edwards family and consumed by flames during the war. Fortunately, William Edwards erected another cabin a mere three miles from the site of Price's headquarters. In 1965, the Foundation acquired this second cabin, which also traced its origins back to the 1850s, and later relocated it to its current position on the battlefield.



Construction of a Picnic Pavilion in 2003

Consider taking your lunch breaks at the battlefield! There are a number of individual picnic tables available for visitors on a first-come, first-served basis. The picnic pavilion may be reserved. The picnic area is surrounded by woods but conveniently located near the visitor center parking lot.

2022-2023 ANNUAL CAMPAIGN DONORS

We deeply appreciate the generous individuals and businesses who have chosen to become foundation sponsors. Your annual sponsorship provides us with reliable income, significantly enhancing the foundation's capacity to support programs, acquire valuable artifacts, and contribute to land preservation efforts.

Below, you will find a listing of our esteemed donors for the fiscal year spanning August 2022 to July 2023. It is through the unwavering financial support of these dedicated patrons that we can make the greatest contribution to Wilson's Creek National Battlefield.

PLATINUM

(gifts of \$5,000 and above)

John Nau III

GOLD

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



SILVER

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

Anonymous	Charles and Mary Beth O'Reilly	State Bank
Great Southern Bank	Carlos Perez	Tom Strong
Brian and Brandy Hickman	Dr. William and Nancy Piston	Karen Sweeney
Husch Blackwell Strategies	Rt 66 Operations	Pat Walker
Christina Moore	Holmes Semken	Tal and Rosalie Wooten Foundation

BRONZE

(gifts of \$500 to \$999)

Matt and Melanie Blunt	Hadley and Jacqueline Ford	David Grimes	McQueary Family
Central Bank	Christopher Foulk	Michael Hampton	Padgett Family Foundation
Thomas Finnie	Carolyn Gerdes	Thomas and Evelyn Mangan	Richard Splitter

COPPER

(gifts of \$250 to \$499)

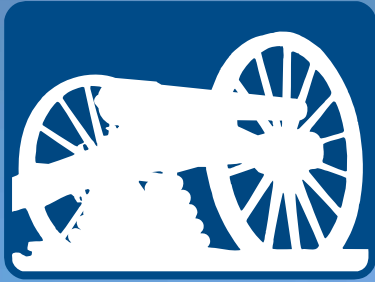
Gary and Jennifer Bishop	Garin and Ashley Ferguson	John Hume and Dee Dosch	Jerry Redfearn
Ken and Charlotte Buckingham	Guaranty Bank	Johnnie Jenkins	Kaye Robbins
David and Sandra Byrd	Sam and June Hamra	Roy and Charlene Johnson	David Snoke
David and Mary Christiano	Hiland Dairy	Christopher and Susan Jones	Worldwide Promotional Products
Civil War Roundtable of the Ozarks	Ted and Rachel Hillmer	Paul and Gena Leitle	
Dr. Michael and Krystyna Clarke	Dennis Hood DMV	James McKay	
Thomas Doneker	John Houlehan	Mark and Karen Perrault	

OTHER DONORS

(gifts of \$100 to \$249)

Steve Bach	James and Patricia Haas	J. Edward Power	Thomas Telle
Craig and Linda Bollenbach	Nicholas and Sarah Inman	Don and Sally Richardson	Florence Thompson
Robert Clayton	Steve Kintz	John and Camille Ricketts	L. Michael Trapasso
John Elkins	Susan Kirkpatrick	Barbara Robinson	Mike and Gena Ussery
James and Vicki Erwin	Maurice Joe Martinez	Steve and Corine Ross	Brian and Denise Vaughan
Maj. Martha Friedmeyer	Ozarks Coca-Cola/Dr. Pepper	Cynthia Schowengerdt	Mark Whisler
William Russell Gaddie	Bottling Company	Crystal Sharp	Sam Williams

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



Wilson's Creek National Battlefield Foundation

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



Front Cover: The Ray House in a photo made after the Civil War (image courtesy NPS)
Above: The historic Ray House today.

PRESERVING OUR HISTORY FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS.