

Fort

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part of the Smithsonian Institution's Hometown Teams grant the park received, which highlighted how team sports have helped shape the American experience. An exhibit, "Hunting: From Survival, to Marketing to Sport", highlighted how hunting in the Fort Larned area helped shape the sporting experience in this part of Kansas.

April also had Fort Larned participating in a nationwide commemoration of the 150th anniversary of Lee's surrender to Grant on April 9, 1865 at Appomattox Courthouse, Virginia. This included a special talk about the surrender meeting, and getting the local community involved in a commemorative bell ringing to mark the end of the historic meeting.

As always, Memorial Day Weekend marked the beginning of the summer season for Fort Larned when our many volunteers help bring the military post to life with living history throughout the year. A total of 239 volunteers contributed 9,130 hours to provide support for Memorial Day, Fourth of July and Labor Day Weekend events, as well as the Candlelight Tour and Christmas Past events. Last year's Candlelight tour featured Medal of Honor recipient Corporal Leander Herron. Corp. Herron was stationed at Fort Larned when he went to the aid of a wood cutting detail under attack by Indians near Fort Dodge. He spent several hours fending off the Indian attack until help arrived from Fort Dodge. The

scenes in the tour highlighted the role Army posts like Fort Larned played in protecting the U.S. mail, as well as the uncertainty experienced on post when news of attacks like the one Corp. Herron defended against filtered back.

The fort received a special gift from Corp. Herron's descendants: a recording of the corporal relating the events that gained him our nation's highest military award. The came from an interview Corp. Herron did in the 1930s called the Chevrolet Chronicles. The series was hosted by Captain Eddie Rickenbacker, WWI flying ace and Medal of Honor recipient himself. The recording is available on the park website as a video with background images to help tell the story. You can find Corp. Herron's story at www.nps.gov/fols/learn/photos-multimedia/multimedia.

In July the oral history project, StoryCorps came to Fort Larned as part of their project to record the experiences of people's connections to National Parks. They recorded the experiences of both park staff, like longtime employee and Chief Ranger George Elmore, and those who lived on the grounds during the ranching period, like ranch hand Philip Perez. In September the Fort dedicated a new Butterfly Garden in the new parking lot area. The garden was constructed with help from Larned Middle School environmental teacher Steve Sterns and his students, with much of the material donated by local Larned businesses. In October, along with the

Pawnee County Humane Society, the fort invited the public to "Bring Your Dog to the Fort", giving people a chance to explore the fort with their pets. PCHS brought some of their adoptable dogs for people to meet and the park staff presented information on pets at the fort during the military period. In November, Larned High School students came out to "Conquer the Prairie" in a series of challenges that included raising a tipi, cooking on a wood stove, saddling a (fake) horse, and starting a fire. From October 30 to November 1st, Fort Larned hosted the Kansas Anthropological Association for their Fall Fling and International Archeology Day Observance. Retired NPS Archeologist Dr. Doug Scott presented talks on how metal detecting and archeological data collection helps us better understand past events. Dr. Scott also spoke about his experiences using archeology to uncover and preserve historical evidence.

This year promises to be a busy one for Fort Larned as the National Park Service Centennial celebrations get underway across the country. Keep an eye out for news about what's coming up next at "the best preserved Indian Wars era fort along the Santa Fe Trail."

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Larned Auto Parts staff, (left to right) Jim Long, Doug Wagner and Steve Erb.



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