

Why is this project important?

This Heritage Project is an important link between the Army and the surrounding community that focuses on our common history. Only through awareness and education can we ensure that our cultural history remains relevant and sustainable for future generations.

How can I get involved?

- √ Commit to share your time, ideas, and your family's past with the Heritage Project staff and others
- √ Become involved in one or more Heritage Project actions such as quilt-making, recipe books, canning demonstrations, plowing, homestead construction techniques or other initiatives that promote the understanding of the past.
- √ Share your family reunion dates with us and others so they may be published. Invite Heritage Project staff to visit at your reunion, to explain the benefits of participating in the program, and our progress to date.
- √ Help identify unknown burials in our cemeteries
- √ Become an active participant in the annual Heritage Day celebration each November and at other venues throughout the year
- √ Help us make this project meaningful, community based and sustainable beyond the immediate future
- √ Spread the word. Engage your family. Get involved.



The Heritage Project staff is attempting to compile an historic archive of pictures and documents related to each of the families and homesteads. If you have pictures or other pertinent documents that would be valuable to the Heritage Collection, our professional staff can make digital copies of them and return them safely to you. For more information, contact Heritage Project Staff at (337) 531-0916.

JRTC & Fort Polk



THE FORT POLK HERITAGE PROJECT

Recognize, Honor, and Memorialize



We will not forget our Heritage Families for they are unsung heroes who surrendered their homes and way of life for the sake of this nation.

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Check out our Website at:

www.polkhistory.org

What is the scope of this program?

The Heritage Family Project recognizes, honors, and memorializes the sacrifices made by families that formerly occupied land that is now Fort Polk. It serves as a regional outreach effort to capture, archive, and share their rich cultural past.

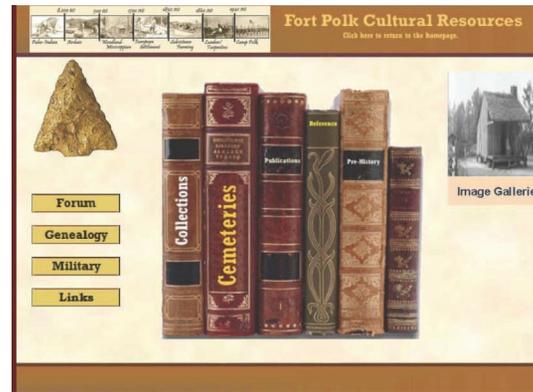
Who is included?

The Heritage Project includes those displaced persons who are still living, their families, and the descendants of anyone who previously lived on Fort Polk lands between 1820 and 1941.

What is needed?

- Recorded **Oral History Interviews** detailing daily life in west central La.
- **Photographs** of people, places, and activities of everyday life to copy into the archives
- Pre-1945 **Documents and Records** of: military service, marriages, taxes, deaths, businesses, land purchases, etc
- **Artifacts** that could be made available for temporary loan and display
- Cemetery **Burial Information** for any unidentified burial
- **Family Trees** that show relationships over multiple generations
- Favorite **Stories/Oral Traditions** handed down or told by a member of the family
- **Sketches** of homesteads with the house in relation to other outbuildings, wells, fences, and agricultural lands
- Favorite family **Recipes** you are willing to share
- **Family Reunion** dates and locations so the Heritage Project staff can distribute information
- Your **Ideas and Help** to enhance the understanding and to educate others about our historical past

www.polkhistory.org



In fulfillment of one of our long term goals, the Heritage Website at polkhistory.org was launched in October 2008 and debuted on 1 November at Heritage Day 2008. The creation of www.polkhistory.org was intended to serve as a platform for sharing information gathered as a result of the Heritage Project, and to provide offsite virtual access to the historic cemeteries.

At Heritage Day 2008, all eighteen cemeteries were available for a virtual tour with photographs of each marked burial and maps of each cemetery. Another special feature that was added to the Virtual Cemetery is a moving panorama of each cemetery.

A portion of the Heritage Collection is also available in a searchable database. Work continues on preparing the rest of the Heritage Collection to be added to the website.

Since the original debut, we have added many of our cultural resource publications and past newsletters. They can be found by clicking the “Publications” book on the homepage. Steven Smith’s *Good Home for a Poor Man* and the 2007 edition of *Remembering Fort Polk’s Heritage* can both be downloaded in PDF form from this page. Also available for download is our Cemetery Access Guide, maps of 2008 Heritage Day Bus Tours as well as the Heritage Coloring Book.

A discussion forum has also been established, allowing anyone interested in the history of Fort Polk to ask questions and interact with Cultural Resource staff members and other interested parties. Current topics include Cemeteries, Cultural Resource Collections, Genealogy, Homesites, Military History, Publications and Upcoming Events.

Check the website often as new collections are being added regularly!