

BGES' Indian Wars Field University Program: **The Central Plains Indian Wars**

Presented by Neil Mangum
April 22-30, 2022 from Kansas City, Missouri

The promise of free land in the West near Santa Fe and the Nebraska and Colorado territories sparked an unprecedented migration west with a concurrent need to protect settlers from the free-ranging lifestyle of the Plains Indians. Originating out of Independence, Missouri (near Kansas City), this program will thoroughly ground you in life on the American frontier in the 19th century both before and after the Civil War. As we move into the heartland of the Great Plains of Kansas, you will see great names in American history, such as Dodge City, Fort Leavenworth, and the important string of forts manned by U.S. cavalry who were charged with keeping the westward trails clear from Indian marauding. This is an important American history story told by a master American history storyteller. Come on and join us.

Friday, April 22, 2022

8 PM: Check in at the La Quinta Inn and Suites Kansas City Airport—your reservations have been made and paid for. Neil and Len will meet you in the lobby and distribute readings and other information about the program. There are several eating establishments within short walking distance from the hotel.

Hotel is included.

Saturday, April 23, 2022

8:30 AM: Boots and Saddles as we commence yet another of Neil Mangum's incomparable Indian Wars tours—of all Len has done with him, he says he likes the Central Plains best! We will start our day at Fort Leavenworth. Western life and army service were anchored on a series of forts, and this is perhaps the most famous. We will visit the Army Frontier Museum and graveyard. We will then head back to Kansas City for lunch and a visit to the Steamship Arabia Museum. Then it is westward ho, making a stop at the Kansas State Museum in Topeka, Kansas, before calling it a day at Junction City.

Lunch and dinner are on your own. Hotel and breakfast are provided.

Sunday, April 24, 2022

8:15 AM: Have your bags out by 8 AM for loading. It seems strange being in the middle of the country to say we are headed to the frontier, and yet the heritage of

the area is more than 150 years old. Sadly, with so many forts in ruin, museums are increasingly important to the interpretative narrative that will complement Neil's expert insights.

Our first stop is Fort Harker, which will be the first in a number of garrisons and staging areas for the security of the trails and settlers. Gen. Samuel Curtis founded Fort Zarah during the Civil War to protect travelers along the Santa Fe Trail. We will continue on, seeing the site of the Cheyenne Village on Pawnee Fork, which Winfield Scott Hancock (sound familiar?) torched in 1867. Hancock then sent Lt. Col. George Armstrong Custer and the Seventh Cavalry in pursuit. We continue along the Santa Fe Trail past Pawnee Rock. Fort Larned is next, and the stories here are true Americans. There are a series of booklets about each of the forts that we will be seeing; you may want to collect them to provide a great deal of post-visit color and insight. We will push ahead to our lodging in Dodge City—one of the west's most famous towns.

We will stay two nights at the La Quinta Inn and Suites Kansas City Airport. Breakfast, lunch, and hotel are included.

Monday, April 25, 2022

8:30 AM. Your luggage stays put. We begin with a quick visit to Fort Dodge and then pick up the story of George Custer today. Custer is controversial for many aspects of his Indian Wars experiences, and his trail to the Little Big Horn is littered with inflammatory and aggressive actions against Indian tribes. Today, we will look at Custer at his destructive best, as he hits a sleeping Cheyenne village along the banks of the Washita River in Oklahoma. We will examine his staging from Fort Supply and his move against Black Kettle's Camp. There are some excellent tactics displayed here, and you will get a real sense of the drama of the Plains Wars. Neil is well-known in the region, and you can expect excellent access to the key sites.

We will provide breakfast, lunch, and the hotel, but dinner is on your own.

Tuesday, April 26, 2022

8:30 AM: Have your bags on board by 8:15 AM, and Boots and Saddles at 8:30 AM. Today, another gritty look at life on the frontier. We move with the settlers of more than a century and a half ago along the ruts of the Santa Fe Trail to the Cimmaron Cut-Off. Next stop is the Punished Woman's Fork battlefield—this was the scene of a vicious fight between Cheyenne who were resisting the white man's control in the fall of 1878. Led by Dull Knife and Little Wolf, the outcome was not certain for either side. Then we examine the story of the kidnapping of four women by the Cheyenne in 1874 and will visit where the Indians murdered a settler family—sad tidings. Our last stop before our hotel is another relic of the times, Fort Wallace. We will visit their cemetery and museum. We are then headed to either Goodland or Colby.

Breakfast, lunch, dinner, and lodging are included.

Wednesday, April 27, 2022

8:15 AM: Boots and Saddles at 8:15 AM, but keep your bags in your room for another night. We are headed for a corner of Colorado and one of the most tactically interesting episodes of the war—both a battle and siege at Beecher's Island. Len finds this place intriguing and dramatic and thinks you will, too. This site was the focus of nine days of drama and was not typical of the Indian Wars. It is worth the time and discussion. We will then head briefly into Nebraska to Benkelman, where Custer camped in 1867 during the Hancock expedition we discussed at Pawnee Fork. This is where Custer was expected to be found by a detachment under the command of Lieutenant Kidder, who was bringing dispatches to Custer. They didn't get there ... Neil will explain why.

Breakfast, lunch, and the hotel are included, and dinner is on your own.

Thursday, April 28, 2022

8:30 AM: Bags out at 8:15, with Boots and Saddles at 8:30 AM. Civil War figures abounded in the old army, and here we start with an army expedition under the control of Col. Edwin V. Sumner, who was commanding at Fort Leavenworth when he led an 1857 expedition that will pursue and attack some 300 Cheyenne braves along Solomon Ford in the Kansas River. Sumner would destroy the village, only to be recalled to support the coming Mormon Expedition of 1857. Since it is on the way, we will stop at Nicodemus National Historic Site—this black settlement in Kansas was created by former enslaved individuals escaping the postwar south and moving to a friendlier environment.

We will turn back toward Kansas City, stopping at the Eisenhower Presidential Library and Museum—Covid limits our opportunities there, and right now we just intend to visit the grounds and Ike's Library. Fort Hays is yet another of the important frontier forts. It is our last stop before arriving at our hotel in Salina, Kansas.

Breakfast, lunch, and a farewell dinner, as well as the hotel, are included.

Friday, April 29, 2022

8:30 AM: Our final push will put bags on board at 8:15 and final call at 8:30 for departure. There are some excellent exhibits at the University of Kansas in Lawrence. We will see Comanche, the horse ridden by Capt. Myles Keogh at the Little Big Horn—Comanche survived! Lawrence is an important American City with strong ties to the Civil War and Bleeding Kansas. We will do a windscreen tour of the city to include the 1863 Sacking of Lawrence by William Quantrill. Our last stop will be at the National World War 1 Museum, because the last time we were there we did

not give near enough time to it—it is spectacular. We will return to La Quinta Inn and Suites Kansas City Airport, where some of you may want to depart tonight. Those of you who plan to depart on the 30th will need to get your own room and make your reservation.

Breakfast is included. We will likely put together an ad hoc dinner trip after returning to the hotel for those who want to join us at your own expense—Len is betting we will either seek Kansas City BBQ or a Kansas City Strip Steak. Breakfast is included.

Saturday, April 30, 2022

You are at RQ this morning—released from duty and free to look around. There are many neat things to see in the Kansas City area, and you may find you want to stay the weekend. Thank you for coming.

About the Faculty:

Neil Mangum is one of the nation's foremost historians and is an expert on frontier life. A retired National Park Service official, Neil served as superintendent at the Little Big Horn National Battlefield as it transitioned from Custer National Battlefield. The popular Mangum only allows himself four or five tours a year, and BGES is fortunate to enjoy his favor. He enjoys the clientele and the small folksy nature of the group that is usually well prepared. Neil is author of [*Battle of the Rosebud: Prelude to the Little Big Horn*](#). He has a following, and most people on this trip will have traveled with him before, which makes this event even nicer.

Hotel Information:

Your registration fee includes 7 nights single or double occupancy lodging. We will base at La Quinta Inn and Suites Kansas City Airport.

Transportation:

The arrival airport is Kansas City International (MCI). If you drive to Kansas City, we will make arrangements for you to leave your car parked there—an additional charge may apply, or you may want to park in long-term parking at the airport and take the hotel shuttle back to the hotel. The hotel will be easily accessible by automobile. Amtrak services Kansas City.

Recommended Reading:

You will be provided with a reading book and maps upon arrival. The following books are suggested to enhance your readiness for the program. Amazon.com has a program to support non-profits IF YOU SIGN UP to support Blue and Gray Education

Society (EIN 54-1720582) at [AmazonSmile](#). When you sign up there rather than the normal Amazon site, one-half of one percent of your purchase price will be provided to BGES as a donation from Amazon. This will apply not only to this purchase but others you may make at other times. Thank you.

Lawrence Frost: [*The Court-Martial of George Armstrong Custer*](#)

Jerome A. Greene: [*Washita: The U.S. Army and the Southern Cheyennes, 1867-1869*](#)

Stan Hoig: [*Perilous Pursuit: The U.S. Cavalry and the Northern Cheyenne*](#)

John Monnett: [*The Battle of Beecher Island and the Indian War of 1867-1869*](#)

Leo E. Oliva: The Kansas Fort Series is 8 volumes about 90 pages each sanctioned by the Kansas State Historical Association, including:

[Fort Dodge](#)

[Fort Harker](#)

[Fort Hays](#)

[Fort Larned](#)

[Fort Scott](#)

[Fort Wallace](#)

Don Richey Jr: [*Forty Miles a Day on Beans and Hay*](#)

David J. Wishart, Editor: [*Encyclopedia of the Great Plains Indians*](#)

Registration Form
The Central Plains Indian Wars
A BGES Indian Wars Field University Program
Presented by Neil Mangum
April 22-30, 2022; from Kansas City, Missouri

Name: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Registration includes 7 nights' lodging, 7 breakfasts, 5 lunches, and 2 dinners; a reading book with maps; the academic program, support of a professional historian, tour director, all admissions, and transportation. We will also provide snacks, bottled water, and a limited selection of sodas. Transportation will be appropriate to the registration. A coach bus requires 20 full-paid registrants; for less, we will use transportation to include passenger vans.

_____ Registration \$2,500 Single

_____ Double occupancy \$2,150 per person

_____ Dues-paying BGES member \$2,395 Single

_____ Dues-paying BGES member \$2,045 per person, Double occupancy

_____ I am not a member or my membership is past-due; I am including at least \$75 to gain membership or renew my membership and enjoy the member's rate. My tax deductible donation is \$ _____.

_____ I am sending a deposit of \$500 per person plus full payment for any memberships. Balance is due at the event.

Total enclosed is \$ _____.

_____ Check enclosed

Charge my (circle one) MC VISA AMEXP Discover \$ _____

Exp: _____ CVV: _____

Signature: _____

Mail to BGES Seminars, P.O. Box 1176, Chatham, VA 24531; or fax credit cards to 434-432-0596. You can also register online at www.blueandgrayeducation.org.