



Davidsonville Historic State Park



Teacher's Guide

Welcome to Davidsonville

The staff at Davidsonville Historic State Park has been informed by school groups and organizations that a field trip to our resource greatly enhances their educational activities. We are pleased to get such an excellent response and would like to thank you by offering this guide to help you plan your visit. We hope that you will schedule annual visits to the park and take full advantage of the wide selection of program opportunities.

Our Mission

Davidsonville Historic State Park exists to protect, preserve and interpret the archeological town site of Davidsonville from the time of western settlement through the Louisiana Purchase to Arkansas Statehood.

A Brief History of Davidsonville

In 1815, Davidsonville was established as the county seat of Lawrence County, which at the time encompassed the northern third of Arkansas and part of Missouri. Davidsonville held many firsts for the state of Arkansas. It was the first town to be surveyed and planned. It was also the location of the first courthouse, post office and federal land office. The Black River provided means of travel and trade with the rest of the world, and this waterway allowed Davidsonville to flourish and grow for fifteen years. Around 1829, though, the county seat was relocated north to Jackson, Arkansas which was closer to more favorable trade routes like the Southwest Trail. The move of the county seat from Davidsonville was the final blow to this young town, and its ultimate demise was soon to follow. After 1829, little is known of Davidsonville's history with the exception that the land around it was used for hay fields and activity along the Black River continued for many decades.

Today there are few remains of the town above ground, but the town lives on. Through archeological and documentary research, we continue to piece together what life was like in this remarkable town on the American frontier.

The town site of Davidsonville and the surrounding lands were designated a state park in 1957 to preserve the historical remnants and natural environment of the area.

Park Facilities

The park visitor information center (VIC) offers a small exhibit area featuring information about the park as well as displaying some artifacts discovered on the site. It also offers a gift shop and vending. In addition, the park offers two open-air screened-in pavilions that can be rented by the hour, a nature cabin, two playgrounds, picnic areas, multiple bathroom facilities and pedal boats and canoes seasonally available to rent. All are ADA accessible.

Park Hours

March through November:

Visitors Information Center

Open: Sunday through Saturday 8am to 5pm

December through February:

Visitors Information Center

Open: Monday through Friday 8am to 5pm

Saturday and Sunday 8 am to Noon



High ground, river access & abundant wildlife make this as attractive destination today as it was in times past.

Planning a Field Trip

Teachers are requested to schedule their visit to the park in advance by calling the park office during business hours. Scheduling should be planned well in advance due to the high volume of schools that participate in the educational programs annually. Allow at least 2 hours for program time with additional time for shopping, lunch and restroom breaks. The time for your programs is packed full so if students will need a restroom stop before beginning their programs, please plan to arrive early. Fees are required upon entrance to the park. When you call, park staff will fill out a reservation form so please be prepared to provide the following information: (Reservation form provided in the appendix of this book.)

- Several options for dates (or have your school calendar handy)
- Your name and e-mail address
- School name, address and phone number
- Number of students and number of adults
- Expected arrival time and departure time
- Special requests and educational objectives
- Plans to eat lunch here
- Any necessary accommodations for students or adults with disabilities
- Grade levels of students
- If you are shopping in our gift shop or would like to order grab bags

Appropriate Clothing

Please suggest that your group wear comfortable walking shoes and clothing appropriate for outdoor activities and inclement weather. If it should rain, the tour will be offered unless there is severe weather or lightning. If you prefer to keep your students inside in the event of rain, alternative program options are available. Groups with over sixty people should contact the park to discuss programming accommodations.

Please note: the park does have the facilities to offer programming in the event of rain, but we do NOT have a fully enclosed, heat or a/c controlled facility in the event of severely hot or cold weather.



Shopping

If you would like to allow your group time to shop, please plan to spend additional time here beyond the time allowed for programming. We can only have a limited number of people shopping at one time and only those who brought money for shopping should be in the gift shop. A variety of souvenirs are available with a starting price of around fifty cents.

If you do not have time to let your students shop, we offer grab bags as an option. (See appendix for a copy of this form.) When your confirmation letter is sent to you we will also include a grab bag order form. Teachers can make photocopies of the form and send it home with their students. The order forms should be collected and sent to the park at least two weeks in advance of your field trip. This allows park staff time to assemble the order and have it ready for you upon arrival. All money should be collected by the teacher and one lump sum payment is made on the day of the field trip. The grab bags are given to the teacher after programming and can be handed out on the bus or at the end of the school day.

When You Get Here

Lunch

You are welcome to bring sack lunches. We have many shaded picnic tables available just outside the VIC and the pavilions. Both of these locations offer easily accessible bathrooms and a playground. The pavilions may be rented in advance at an hourly rate and may be used during increment weather. Chips, candy, crackers, and sodas are sold in the gift shop.



Accessibilities for People With Disabilities

The VIC, pavilions and the Town Site trail are wheelchair accessible. We are also committed to providing program access to people with disabilities to ensure full participation. This is accomplished by providing auxiliary aids and services when necessary. If you are aware of any auxiliary aids and services that would ensure full participation of any of your students, staff or chaperones, please let us know when you call to make your reservations or as soon as you are aware of a need. TTY access is available through Arkansas Relay Services at 1-800-285-1131.

Directions to the Park

From Pocahontas: From U.S. Hwy 62 out of Pocahontas, turn onto State Hwy 166 South. (There are signs at this turn directing you to our Park). Once on Hwy 166 South, the park entrance will appear on your left after 9 miles.

From US. Hwy 63 at Black Rock: Turn onto Hwy 25 or Hwy 117 from US Hwy 63. Follow either of these through Black Rock to the Volunteer Fire Department on the corner of HWY 361. Take State Hwy 361 and travel 6 miles north to the park. Brown park signs are located at each intersection indicating the correct direction to the park.

Please see Appendix 1 for an area map.

Discipline of Your Group

You are responsible for the discipline of your group. This allows the park staff to spend their energy providing quality programs and responding to questions from students. We suggest that you have one adult for every 10-15 students. Please make the chaperones aware of their discipline responsibilities. Park Interpreters may end a program at their discretion if discipline problems are not corrected.

To help protect your students and this park, please make sure all students follow the rules of the park. All plants, animals, artifacts and features in the park are protected by state law. Please leave them for the next person to enjoy. While on tour, all students should remain with the group unless they are instructed by staff or a teacher to leave the group.

Educational Programming

The staff at Davidsonville Historic State Park has developed a variety of programs aimed at meeting the educational goals of teachers. Many students visit the park several times over the course of several years. By providing different programs to different grade levels, we hope to ensure that students get a different and exciting learning experience with each visit to the park.

History

The dream & plan for Davidsonville was the foundation for a future Arkansas.

Welcome to Davidsonville: Guided Site Tour

A Park Interpreter will lead your group on the ½ mile paved Town Site Trail that sits on the old town site of Davidsonville. During this tour, your group will learn about the once vibrant town of Davidsonville and how it played a role in the early politics of Arkansas. Recommended for all ages. Duration: 1 hour

The Importance of Rivers

Waterways were extremely vital to a town's survival in the early 1800s. This program discusses why the Black River was so important to the inhabitants of Davidsonville, but also how it may have led to its demise. River men's lifestyles, products and transportation vessels are also discussed. Recommended for 3rd and up. Duration: 30 min



You've Got Mail

Ever wonder how the mail was delivered before we had mail men? This program tells about the postal system in the early 1800s, and how it influenced the town of Davidsonville for both the good and the bad. Recommended for 3rd and up. Duration: 30 min

Additional Activity: Letter Writing with Quill Pens* – 30 min

Kids on the Frontier

Your group will learn how children lived on the frontier from the chores they had to the games they played. Recommended up through 6th grade. Duration: 1 hour

Additional Activity: Sewing* – 30 min

Women on the Frontier

Your group will learn what a woman's daily life was like on the frontier. Recommended for 3rd and up. Duration: 30 min

Additional Activity: Sewing* – 30 min

Additional Demonstrations:

Dutch Oven Cooking* – 45 min

Inkle Weaving* – 30 min

Candle Making* – 30 min



Educational Programming

French Fur Traders

The inhabitants of Davidsonville encountered many different kinds of people with French fur traders being among them. This program describes the purpose of traders in the early 1800s economy, their impact on the environment and their role in the frontier society. Recommended for 3rd and up. Duration: 30 min

Additional Demonstration: Black Powder Gun*



Hiking through History

On this easy hike, your group will visit two historic cemeteries, the Philips/Reeves and Scott Cemeteries. They will learn how cemeteries can be helpful when studying the past and learn about a more personal side of Davidsonville. Recommended for 3rd and up. Duration 1 hour

Native American Tools and Weapons

Since Davidsonville was on the American frontier, Native Americans would have had a large influence on their society. This program discusses the basic survival needs of Native Americans and how they were able to obtain those needs through various tools and weapons. Recommended for 3rd and up. Duration: 1 hour

Added Activity: Atl Atl Throwing – 30 min

The buttons, coins, & cups found here
reveal the same desire for quality of life
as we seek today.

Archeology

Archeology? What's that?

Your group will not only learn what archeology is, but will also learn the challenges that face archeologists and why it's important. Recommended for 4th and up. Duration: 1 hour

Additional Activity: Piece the Pot back together* – 30 min

Mock Dig

After students are introduced to skills necessary to become an archeologist, they will participate in a mock dig. In a staged setting, students will excavate and map artifacts just like real archeologists. Recommended for 4th grade and up. Duration: 45 minutes

Additional Activity: Piece the Pot back together* – 30 min

Pieces of the Past: Learning From Artifacts

Tens of thousands of artifacts have been uncovered at Davidsonville, and each one offers another clue to the lives that were once lived here. Groups will learn about the residents of Davidsonville through the artifacts found here. Recommended for 4th grade and up. Duration: 1 hour

Additional Activity: Piece the Pot back together* – 30 min



Educational Programming

Wildlife

Mammals: Who Am I?

This guessing game introduces students to the various types of animals that can be found in Arkansas. Students will learn about animal habitats, physical characteristics, animal behavior and how these animals may have been used by the residents of Davidsonville or local Native Americans. Animal pelts will accompany the program giving students an opportunity to touch various furs. Recommended for all ages. Duration: 45 minutes

Bats: Winged Avengers

Your group will learn about bats, and how they are advantageous to the environment (and us!) in the war against mosquitoes. Recommended for 3rd and up. Duration: 1 hour

The Story of Betty and Bob Beaver

Your group will be introduced to beavers and their adaptations to their habitats while dressing like a beaver and taking a walk in search of beavers and evidence of beaver activity. Recommended up through 4th. Duration: 1 hour

The Tracks of Life

While hiking the easy Black River Trail, your group will be on the look out for signs of life. Whether its deer tracks, raccoon scat or the chirping of crickets, your group will learn about the various marks presented by life in the woods as a testament to their existence. Recommended for all ages. Duration: 1 hour

Nature

Tree Detective

At Davidsonville there are tons of different kinds of trees, but which is which? In this program, your group will learn about various types of trees and then be tree detectives using a dichotomous key to identify several trees. Recommended for 4th and up. Duration: 1 hour

Rockin' and Rollin'

Did you know a mineral can be a rock, but that a rock is not always a mineral? Or that Arkansas is home to some very unique and unusual minerals? This program is all about rocks and minerals. Your group will learn the difference between a rock and a mineral, a little Arkansas geology and will identify several rocks/minerals. Recommended for 3rd and up. Duration: 1 hour

Sensing Nature

During this easy hike on the Trapper Lake Trail, your group will use all five senses to explore the environment around them. From smelling the flowers to touching the bark of a tree, your group will learn to experience nature with more



Custom Designing your Field Trip

Park staff at Davidsonville Historic State Park is committed to providing programs that meet the needs of your group. You may pick from the list of programs above or make a special program request to spend an entire day at the park. If you have any suggestions for interpretive programs or educational activities you would like to see at Davidsonville, we are always open to new ideas and comments. Another option is to visit Davidsonville in the morning and Lake Charles State Park or Powhatan Historic State Park in the afternoon. Contact each park for scheduling information.

Getting the Most From Your Visit

Out-of-Park/Traveling Interpretive Programs

Some of the above programs can be provided in your school. Staff members can travel to schools that are within a 50-mile radius of the park. These programs are available on a limited basis so please call in advance.

Plan a Pre-visit

Teachers are encouraged to visit the park in order to prepare their class prior to their scheduled visit. If you inform the staff of the purpose of your visit, you will not be charged an admission fee. This will allow you to familiarize yourself with the park and its facilities and to pick up teaching resources. Park staff also offer ADE approved teacher workshops that will help you in making program choices and make you aware of all that we have to offer.

Preparing Your Students

Research shows that students retain information from field trips better if they have some prior knowledge about what they will see, hear and experience. We hope that you will take the time to share this information with your students prior to their visit with us.

Post Trip Activity Packets

We offer post trip activity sheets that can be distributed to your students after your field trip. If you would like a post trip activity packet, please ask a Park Interpreter for one when you leave the park so that you may share it with all of your fellow educators.

Consider a Trip to Lake Charles State Park or Powhatan Historic State Park

Lake Charles State Park

Located 12 miles from Davidsonville, Lake Charles offers a variety of educational programming focusing on nature and the outdoors.

Powhatan Historic State Park

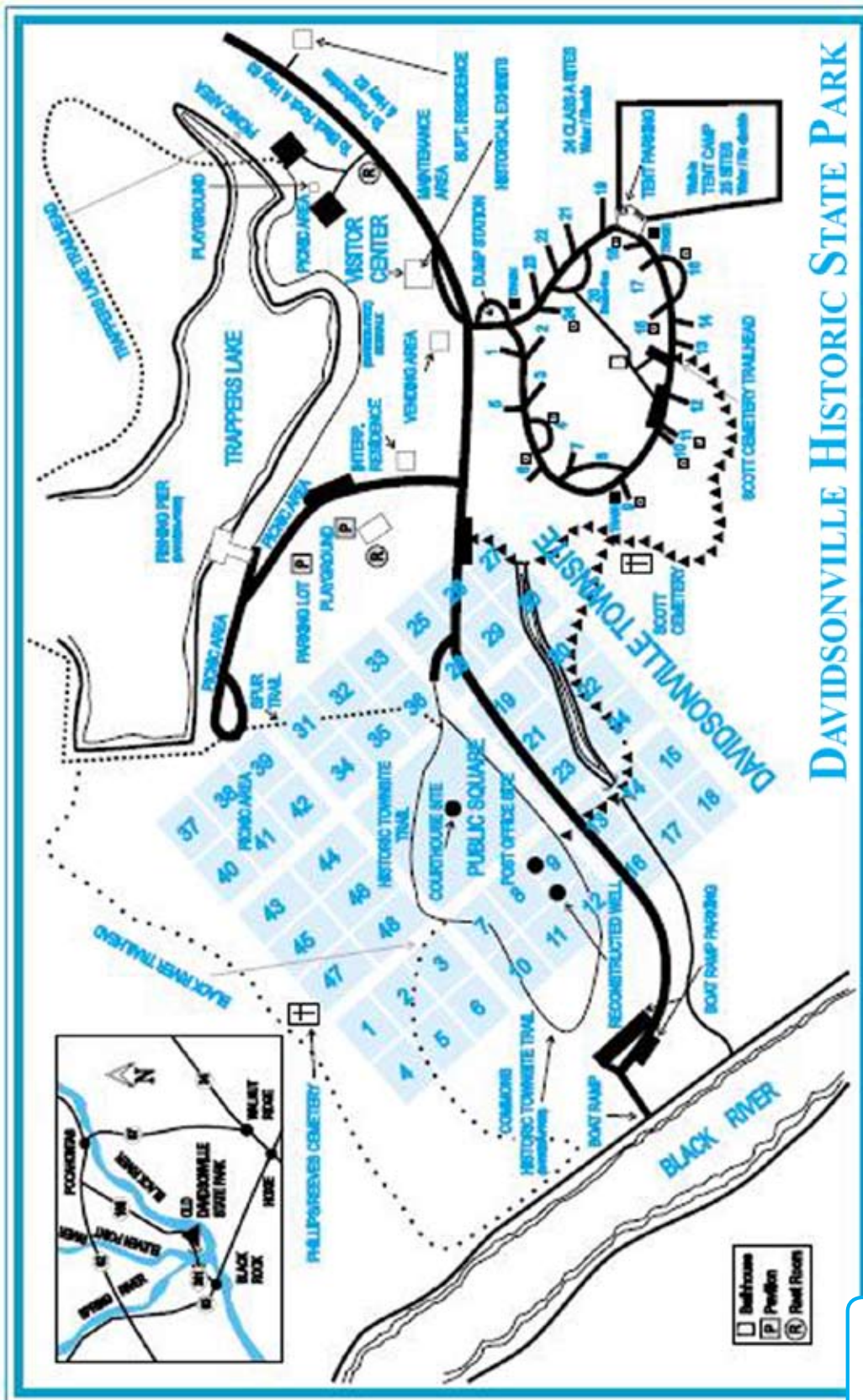
Located 10 miles from Davidsonville, Powhatan Historic offers a variety of educational programming focused on the mid to late 1800's and tells the story of domestic and commercial life during that time. The park includes the historic Powhatan Courthouse, Powhatan Jail, Ficklin-Imboden Log House, Commercial Building, and Powhatan Male and Female Academy, a two-room schoolhouse.

Contacting Us

If you have further questions or would like to make a reservation, please contact us:

Davidsonville Historic State Park
7953 Highway 166 South
Pocahontas, AR 72455
Phone: 870.892.4708
Fax: 870.892.0480
Email: Davidsonvillehistoric@arkansas.com
Web: arkansasstateparks.com





DAVIDSONVILLE HISTORIC STATE PARK



Davidsonville Historic State Park

7953 Highway 166 South
Pocahontas, AR 72455
(870) 892-4708

Program Reservation & Confirmation Letter

Contact Information

Organization: _____ Reservation Date: _____
Contact Person: _____ Telephone: _____
Address: _____ City: _____ Zip: _____
E-mail: _____

Program Information

Today's Date: _____ Reservation Taken By: _____

Program Time: Begins at _____ ends at _____

Grade/Age: _____ No. of Students: _____ No. of Adults: _____

Picnic Tables?: _____ Shopping?: _____

Send Grab Bag Information?: _____

Programs Selected:

Duration:

We highly recommend 1 chaperone for every 15 students.

Davidsonville Historic State Park

Grab Bag Order Form

\$1

Honeystick
Davidsonville Mood Pencil
Davidsonville Postcard

\$2

Honeystick
Davidsonville Postcard
Replica Coin

\$4

Honeystick
Davidsonville Postcard
Replica Coin
Replica Musket Ball

\$6

Rock Candy
Davidsonville Postcard
Replica Coin
Replica Quill Pen
Twig Pencil

\$8

Rock Candy
Davidsonville Postcard
Replica Coin
Replica Musket Ball
Replica Quill Pen
Twig Pencil

\$10

Rock Candy
Honeystick
Davidsonville Postcard
Replica Coin
Replica Musket Ball
Replica Quill Pen
Twig Pencil
Wildlife Magnet
Davidsonville Patch
Davidsonville Mood Pencil

- No Substitutions, Exchanges or Refunds
- We reserve the right to alter grab bag contents based on item availability.

Order Form

Cut along dotted line.

Students-Please return this form and payment to your teacher promptly.

Student's Name _____

Teacher's Name _____

Number of Grab Bags

Total Amount: _____

\$1 Grab Bags x _____ = _____

Correct Change Only

\$2 Grab Bags x _____ = _____

Cash: \$ _____

\$4 Grab Bags x _____ = _____

Check: \$ _____

\$6 Grab Bags x _____ = _____

\$8 Grab Bags x _____ = _____

\$10 Grab Bags x _____ = _____

Parents-Please return to the teacher.

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Pocahontas, AR 72455

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