



**Topographical Engineer School  
at  
Bent's Old Fort National Historic Site  
Staff for 2011**

The instructors are members of the U S Corps of Topographical Engineers -- a Colorado non-profit Corporation for historical education. With a membership comprised primarily of scientists and engineers, the organization strives to portray the history and techniques of the Corps from its inception through the Civil War.

**Don Erickson** is a geologist and owns Image Exploration in Littleton, Colorado. His firm specializes in international photogeologic-geomorphic mapping, remote sensing interpretations, and field mapping, primarily for petroleum exploration. He is a member of Sigma Gamma Epsilon, an Honorary Earth Science Fraternity, and the Company of Military Historians. He has published many articles in the fields of earth science and the military role in western expansion and has made numerous presentations to national and international conferences.



He has been active in living history since 1986 and has been a volunteer interpreter for several National Park sites in both civilian and military roles. In 1995, he incorporated the U.S. Corps of Topographical Engineers as a living history group.

**Kevin Reddy** is a geophysicist, owns High Prairie Geotechnical in Casper, Wyoming, and is engaged in petroleum exploration. He has authored several papers in the fields of earth science and history and has presented several programs to museums and schools.

He has been active in civilian and military living history since the early 1990's, joined the US Corps of Topographical Engineers in 1999, and has volunteered at Bent's Old Fort since 2000. He has been an instructor in the Topographical Engineer Interpretive Course from its beginning.



**Bob Mergel** is currently a professor and coordinator of Civil Engineering Technology at Columbus State Community College in Columbus, Ohio and lecturer (adjunct faculty) at the Ohio State University teaching undergraduate geodetic science courses. Bob is registered as both a Professional Surveyor and Professional Engineer in the State of Ohio. He is a member of the Ohio Society of Professional Engineers, the National Society of Professional Surveyors, and the Surveyors Historical Society. His professional activities include Ohio Professional Exam Committee - State of Ohio Board of Registration for Engineers and Surveyors and the EPS Exam Committee National Council of Examiners for Engineering and Surveyors.



Bob became involved in civil war reenacting in 2002 and helped form the “U.S. Topographical Engineers – Army of the Cumberland” in 2007. He is active in presenting historical programs to local and national organizations.

**James Erickson** is an Architect specializing in affordable homes and sustainable communities with the Stardust Center at Arizona State University and has taught undergraduate design and graphics courses while finishing his PhD in environmental design and planning. He is the author of several papers on reactive architecture and personal comfort.



James has been active in living history since 1992 portraying civilian roles. This interest has developed into the study of expeditionary art. James has been an instructor in the Topographical Engineer Interpretive Course since 2008.

Staff for 2011, continued

**Rick Lohsen** retired from Los Alamos National Laboratory as a physicist where he retains an association as a guest scientist. He is a retired US Army Corps of Engineers officer whose duties included a teaching stint in the Department of Physics at West Point. Additionally, he is a licensed Professional Engineer in the Commonwealth of Virginia.



His principal interest is in the history of the US Army as an institution, as opposed to its battle history. He has been active in military and civilian living history since 2000, adding a portrayal of a contract computer for the Topographical Engineers in 2006. He has been volunteering in this and related roles at Bent's Fort since 2006 and has made many "I am a soldier" presentations at elementary and middle schools.

**Dennis Chappell** is a professional firefighter with the Pueblo Fire Department. He has been involved in living history since 1992 and has been a member of the U.S. Corps of Topographical Engineers since 2000. Additionally, he has actively volunteered at Bent's Old Fort since 1998. His areas of expertise include Santa Fe trade and 19<sup>th</sup> century military. He has given numerous programs to museums, schools, and historical societies on these subjects and has presented on the subject of the topog/dragoon relationship on western expeditions.



**Bruce Richardson** is currently a teacher and administrator in the Kuspuk School District in western Alaska. He teaches history and social sciences as well as being the director of the Joe Parent Vocational Education Center for this region. He is active in state and local curriculum development for the several Alaska school districts.



He has held several positions including seasonal director of the Kit Carson Museum at Rayado for the Philmont Scout Ranch in Cimarron, New Mexico as well as working with several museums and organizations over the years including the Union Pacific Railroad Museum; national, state and county historical societies; and other educational groups. Bruce has been a member of the U.S. Corps of Topographical Engineers since 2000.