



**JEAN LAFITTE NATIONAL  
HISTORICAL PARK AND PRESERVE**

NPS/A.J. Sisco

**CHALMETTE BATTLEFIELD  
BATTLE OF NEW ORLEANS BICENTENNIAL  
INFORMATION  
FOR LIVING HISTORY APPLICANTS  
JANUARY 7-10, 2015**



# CHALMETTE BATTLEFIELD BATTLE OF NEW ORLEANS BICENTENNIAL INFORMATION FOR LIVING HISTORY APPLICANTS JANUARY 7-10, 2015



## WHY SHOULD I READ ALL THIS?

2015 is different. Even if you've participated in many Battle of New Orleans anniversaries, 2015 will not be the same as previous years. The park expects large crowds of visitors, dignitaries for ceremonies and programs, and new logistical challenges. "All this" is here for you to read so you can make good choices and the park will have good information to support everything happening in 2015.



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## WHY SHOULD I APPLY TO PARTICIPATE IN CHALMETTE BATTLEFIELD BICENTENNIAL EVENTS?

You must apply to participate if you want to

- set up a period camp at Chalmette Battlefield for daytime use or overnight camping
- participate in or lead a ceremony
- participate in or lead a scheduled Battle of New Orleans University program or demonstration or a scheduled program or demonstration at your period camp

You don't need to apply to participate if you simply want to attend Chalmette Battlefield bicentennial events, either in period dress or in "non-period" clothes.

## WHAT'S THE TIMELINE FOR APPLYING TO PARTICIPATE?

**Applications are due by Sunday, August 31, 2014.**

When the park receives your application, we will send you a confirmation to let you know we got it.

You will receive notification from the park by Wednesday, October 1, 2014, whether your application has been accepted or not. When your application is accepted, you will be considered a registered participant. Only registered participants will be allowed to set up period camps or participate in/lead ceremonies or Battle of New Orleans University programs or demonstrations. The park will send regular updates to registered participants.

# WHAT'S HAPPENING AT CHALMETTE BATTLEFIELD?

Chalmette Battlefield, site of the Battle of New Orleans on January 8, 1815, and one of six sites of Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve, will be the center of activity for the commemoration of the battle's bicentennial in January 2015. The park's theme for the event is "Celebrating Unity"---not the most obvious choice for a battle commemoration. The battle and its aftermath did demonstrate unity, however,

- Among the American troops, men from a range of regions, races, languages, religions, and social classes
- Among the British troops, who also had a highly diverse force
- Between the United States and Britain, one-time enemies that have developed an unprecedented alliance

Chalmette Battlefield is currently hosting "Battle of New Orleans University" workshops to inspire and involve the public. Workshops will provide historical background and share skills required by civilian and military life in the early 1800s, from knot-trying to sewing to rolling cartridges. Jean Lafitte rangers will also present a series of programs in the fall and winter designed to provide context for the New Orleans campaign.

## Your Participation Choices At A Glance: Bicentennial at Chalmette Battlefield

	Jan 7	Jan 8 a.m.	Jan 8 p.m.	Jan 9 a.m.	Jan 9 p.m.	Jan 10 a.m.	Jan 10 p.m.
Period camp – day use or overnight camping							
Participate in Natl Park Svc opening ceremony							
Schedule a ceremony led by your unit							
Participate in Natl Park Svc closing ceremony							
Participate in black powder firing demonstrations							
Lead/participate in SCHEDULED activities, talks, demonstrations, etc., at your period camp							
Lead/participate in SCHEDULED activities, talks, demonstrations, etc., at Battle of New Orleans University							



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# THE DETAILS, DAY BY DAY

## **Commemoration Day on Thursday, January 8, the 200th anniversary of the Battle of New Orleans**

- Presented by Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve, a morning ceremony at Chalmette Battlefield will reflect the importance of the bicentennial as well as the many people and groups who contributed to that historic day 200 years ago. Representatives of many groups, organizations, service branches, etc. that participated in the Battle of New Orleans will attend and/or speak at this event. The park also expects dignitaries to be in attendance. You can indicate on your application if you would like to participate in this event as a color guard, escorting dignitaries, raising the flags, etc.

- Additional tributes are expected to occur throughout the day at the battlefield. If your unit would like to schedule a ceremony at Chalmette Battlefield on Commemoration Day, January 8, be sure to indicate it on your application.

## **School field trips on Friday, January 9**

The student experience will focus on the human side of the Battle of New Orleans story: the men who fought on both sides, the civilians who supported their efforts, and the skills and teamwork required for military success and for everyday life in 1815. School registration will be required and student participant numbers will be limited. The battlefield will also be open to the general public.

- Battle of New Orleans University tents and stations on the battlefield will allow students to watch NPS staff, registered living history participants, and park volunteers share the skills required of troops and civilians during the War of 1812, from knot-tying to campfire cooking to rolling cartridges to military drills to cannon and small arms firing demonstrations. Students may also learn sea shanties, play period games, etc. Note that because of the numbers of students expected, Battle of New Orleans University stations will not necessarily provide students with “hands-on” activities.

- School groups will explore the battlefield at their own pace and under the leadership of teachers and chaperones. To prepare for the visit, each registered group will be sent a pre-visit packet with materials and activities geared to their grade level and based on the Louisiana state curriculum. Teachers will be encouraged to attend a workshop in fall 2014 that will provide them with further background to improve everyone’s experience.

- If you would like to participate in or lead Battle of New Orleans University activities, scheduled demonstrations or activities at your period camp, and/or firings on Friday, be sure to indicate it on your application.

## **Saturday, January 10**

- Visitors to the battlefield will experience the historic events of 1815 through self-guided tours, cannon and musket small arms firings demonstrations, Battle of New Orleans University programs, and a full roster of speakers, music, book signings, and other activities.

- If you would like to participate in or lead activities on Saturday, including Battle of New Orleans University activities, firings, and/or scheduled demonstrations or activities at your period camp, be sure to indicate it on your application.

- A closing ceremony is scheduled for 4:00 p.m. You can indicate on your application if you would like to participate in this event as a color guard, escorting dignitaries, raising the flags, etc.



# ABOUT CHALMETTE BATTLEFIELD

Chalmette Battlefield is located on the east bank of the Mississippi River about six miles downriver from Jackson Square, the heart of New Orleans' French Quarter. The physical (and mailing) address is 8606 West St. Bernard Highway, Chalmette LA 70043. Chalmette is an unincorporated community in St. Bernard (Civil) Parish. The battlefield is a quiet and peaceful place these days, but it's only a 20-minute drive to the French Quarter, where you can find music, fabulous cuisine, Bourbon Street, and three centuries of history. St. Bernard Parish also offers fascinating history and good eating and is famous for its hospitality to Battle of New Orleans anniversary participants.



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On the battlefield itself, you'll find a visitor center (newly built after Hurricane Katrina and dedicated on January 8, 2011), the historic Malus-Beauregard House (built in the 1830s as a country house), and Chalmette Monument, a 100-foot-high obelisk honoring the troops of 1815. Rodriguez Canal is still visible on the battlefield, the only War of 1812 human artifact still readily visible though greatly reduced in size and depth. A reconstructed rampart stands behind it: located in embrasures along the rampart are reproduction artillery pieces, including one 18-pounder and two 6-pounders that are part of the historic weapons demonstration program. The Mississippi River flows on the other side of the levee from the battlefield. In the area where British artillery once pounded the American position stands Chalmette National Cemetery, a Civil War-era cemetery that contains the graves of four participants from the War of 1812.

## HOW TO STAY INFORMED

Museums, living history groups, organizations, state and local governments, restaurants, branches of the military, colleges and universities: everyone understands that the bicentennial of the Battle of New Orleans deserves to be a very special commemoration. The main bicentennial web page on Jean Lafitte's website at [www.nps.gov/jela/battle-of-new-orleans-bicentennial.htm](http://www.nps.gov/jela/battle-of-new-orleans-bicentennial.htm) is a good place to start if you're looking for information.



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## WHO CAN APPLY TO PARTICIPATE?

Living history units and individuals representing participants in the Battle of New Orleans and the civilians who supported them are welcome to apply to participate in activities at Chalmette Battlefield.

On the British side, appropriate units to represent include the 4th, 7th, 21st, 27th, 41st, 43rd, 44th, 85th, 89th, 93rd, and 95th Regiments, the 1st and 5th West India Regiments, the 14th Light Dragoons, British general staff, Royal Artillery, Royal Horse Artillery Rocket Troop, Royal Navy, Royal Marines, Royal Engineers, and Royal Sappers and Miners.

On the American side, appropriate units include the 7th and 44th US Infantry Regiments, Light Artillery Corps, US Marines, US Navy, 1st US Dragoons, Jean Lafitte's Baratarians, Hinds' Mississippi Mounted Rifles, free men of color battalions, the units making up Plauché's Battalion, Beale's Rifles, Jugeant's Choctaws, and the Louisiana, Tennessee and Kentucky militias.

Other groups may also be appropriate; be sure to describe your unit on your application. Be sure to describe your portrayal on your application if you check "Other American" or "Other British."

Reenactors representing civilians of the period are welcome.

## CAN YOU APPLY TO PARTICIPATE IN CHALMETTE BATTLEFIELD EVENTS AND AT LIVING HISTORY EVENTS ELSEWHERE? YES, YOU CAN!

Jean Lafitte's goal is to make the bicentennial of the Battle of New Orleans as inclusive as possible. The park understands that there are a wealth of opportunities for living history and other activities, and we encourage everyone to do as much as is humanly possible. This is a once-in-a-lifetime event for all of us so let's make it memorable!

Note that the application to participate in events at Chalmette Battlefield is not the same as the application to participate in reenactments and other living history activities at the Chalmette Living History Park; that information and application is at <http://neworleans1815.cottonbaler.com/index.html>



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# LOGISTICS

- **Overnight camping** at Chalmette Battlefield is only allowed in period camps (see next item).
- If your unit would like to set up a **period camp**, be sure to indicate that on your application, along with number and size of tents. Period camps must be set up on Wednesday, January 7, and must stay in place through the night of Saturday, January 10 (period camps will break down on the morning of Sunday, January 11). Period camps may be used as sleeping quarters or for day use only. Only unit leaders may apply for period camps. Historic authenticity standards (see below) will apply to period camps. Note that you or your unit may apply to participate in battlefield events even if you do not apply for a period camp.
- **Camp locations** will be as follows: American camps will be set up along Battlefield Road. British camps will be set up on the battlefield (not the Mississippi River) side of the Malus-Beauregard House. Civilians will be assigned appropriate areas depending on their portrayals. (A link to a battlefield map is at <http://www.nps.gov/jela/chalmette-battlefield.htm>)
- There will be **camp facilitators** assigned to period camps. The camp facilitators will be the go-to people for all questions and problems; if they can't answer a question, they'll know who can.
- Note that **no participant vehicles** will be allowed on the battlefield during event hours due to the large crowds that are expected.
- Participants will have a **designated parking area** accessible by parking pass only; shuttles will provide transportation between the parking area and the battlefield.
- For those looking for a **hotel room**, check the options in St. Bernard Parish <http://www.visitstbernard.com/> or at the New Orleans Convention and Visitor Bureau website <http://www.neworleanscvb.com/>
- For those looking for **RV and camping accommodations**, there are several state parks in the Chalmette/New Orleans area; visit the Louisiana State Parks website <http://www.crt.state.la.us/louisiana-state-parks/> Visit <http://www.neworleanscvb.com/> for commercial campground information.
- **No pets** will be allowed on the battlefield Wednesday, January 7, through Saturday, January 10. Pets may not be left unattended in vehicles in the participant parking area.
- National Park Service rangers will be in charge of **emergency services** during the bicentennial event. Registered participants will receive information about on-site emergency services, who to contact if emergencies arise, and an emergency phone number to leave with friends or family if they need to reach you during the event.
- **Hot and cold drinks and light snacks** will be available for living history participants, park volunteers, and park staff Thursday through Saturday at locations around the battlefield.
- **Rations for campfire cooking** will be provided for registered participants for Thursday, Friday, and Saturday lunch.
- Note that **no alcoholic beverages** may be consumed on site during event hours.
- Registered participants will be provided with a **farewell buffet breakfast** on the battlefield 7:30-8:30 a.m. on Sunday, January 11. We ask that all camps be cleared by noon that day so park staff can get to the job of cleaning up.
- The park will provide **drinking water, portable toilets, dry firewood, and bedding straw** either delivered or available in pick-up locations on the battlefield.
- The park will provide all **black powder** to be used at the battlefield.
- **Items for demonstrations** such as sugarcane for fascines and poles for ladders in the British camp may be supplied. If you have a demonstration supply request, include it in your application in the section "Is there any other information you would like to share with the park?"



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# HISTORIC WEAPONS AND BLACK POWDER

- There will be an extensive schedule of black powder demonstrations featuring small arms in the British camp and both artillery and small arms in the American camp. **The park will provide all black powder** in prepared



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cartridges, whether for musket, rifle or artillery, for all firings at the battlefield. If you wish to bring an artillery piece, include it in your application in the section “Is there any other information you would like to share with the park?”

- **Note that on the firing line and in areas roped off for firings, the word of the National Park Service Black Powder Safety Officer is absolute.**
- Do not bring black powder to the battlefield. The park will provide all black powder used at the battlefield.
- A copy of the Chalmette Battlefield Standard Operating Procedure for Historic Weapons and Black Powder Safety will be provided to registered participants. The park will use this document and

other pertinent National Park Service guidelines and policies to make any decisions regarding historic weapons and black powder. The event Black Powder Safety Officer will have the final authority on any such decision. As always, safety is the primary concern.

- For American units, the National Park Service prefers its own modified version of the Smyth drill. Other drills are appropriate for this period, and at the discretion of and with the approval of the event Black Powder Safety Officer, individual units may use the War of 1812 period manual to which they are most accustomed when firing and marching as a separate unit. Morning and evening formations in the American camp as well as any mass firing demonstrations will be conducted according to Smyth’s Manual. For British units, the corresponding regulation period musket and rifle drills for infantry will be used. Artillery drill will be conducted according to National Park Service regulations and safety modifications.

- Note that facilities for weapon maintenance and repair are extremely limited on site and there will be no time for training during the event.

- Before a unit (or any member thereof) can participate in any firing demonstration,

- 1) The unit leader must sign the Black Powder Agreement certifying that he or she has read and understood the Black Powder Standard Operating Procedure and will comply with it fully.

- 2) All unit firearms must pass a safety inspection.

- 3) The unit must demonstrate its drill to the satisfaction of the event Black Powder Safety Officer.

## EDGED WEAPONS

- National Park Service policy states that edged weapons (swords, knives and bayonets) may be drawn and brandished in a safe and prudent manner when the bearer and the weapon are behind a barrier in a secure area out of reach of visitors.

- When NOT behind a barrier or when out amongst visitors, edged weapons may NOT be fully drawn. They may be drawn out of the scabbard enough to expose some of the blade for visual inspection for interpretive purposes, but no visitor may touch the blade.

- When not behind a barrier, bayonets may be fixed on muskets but the muskets must be kept in a vertical position and the bearer must maintain control of the weapon and the bayonet. At no time may muskets be fired with the bayonet fixed.

- At no time may participants engage in combat with edged weapons or simulated edged weapons without the express permission and consent of the event Black Powder Safety Officer.

# HISTORIC AUTHENTICITY

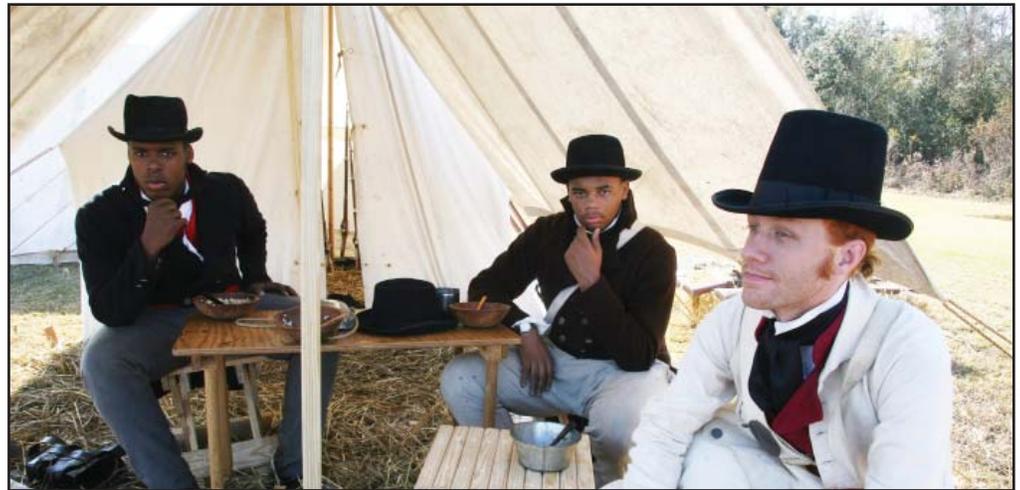
Authenticity guidelines for the bicentennial of the Battle of New Orleans at Chalmette Battlefield will be the same as those used by the reenactors participating in activities at the Chalmette Living History Park, which is staging reenactments of the battle and the skirmishes leading up to it. You can learn more about these events and read the authenticity guidelines at <http://neworleans1815.cottonbaler.com/index.html>. The success of the bicentennial depends on everyone working together, and the park would like to propose three hearty huzzahs for all of the living history associations who are organizing and participating in the many bicentennial events!

- Every reenactor should strive for and maintain historical accuracy and authenticity in period dress and accoutrements, character role portrayals, and demonstrations. Any determination made by park staff on historical authenticity and appropriateness is final.
- The event at Chalmette Battlefield attempts to recreate a hastily-assembled military camp on both sides. Stay faithful to the impression you are portraying.
- Historical authenticity standards will be observed and in effect during event hours on Thursday, Friday and Saturday. More information on these standards will be sent to registered participants.

## THE BIG PICTURE

Why do we commemorate the Battle of New Orleans every year? Your interest in history means that you understand the importance of the battle in American history---but not everyone does. Each year, the park's goal is for visitors to go away with an understanding of why the War of 1812 was important to its contemporaries and how it shaped the world we live in. For park visitors, this is an interpretive program, one that explains why the Battle of New Orleans is important to their lives and why Chalmette Battlefield is relevant today.

Remember that though sharing facts is important, it's not enough. Even when done well, a recitation of facts leaves the audience to wonder, "Why should I care?" Think about why you care about history: because you can see yourself reflected in the lives of those who went before, because an event uprooted a family member or provided a new opportunity, because you can see how the results of a battle fought two centuries ago altered the way your country is perceived today. Think about what has touched your heart and mind---that's probably what will touch the hearts and minds of the public too.



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## QUESTIONS?

Contact Nathan Hall

nathan\_hall@nps.gov

504-281-0511 ext 31



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## REMEMBER---YOU MUST SUBMIT YOUR APPLICATION TO PARTICIPATE BY SUNDAY, AUGUST 31, IF YOU WANT TO

- set up a period camp at Chalmette Battlefield for daytime use or overnight camping
- participate in or lead a ceremony
- participate in or lead a scheduled Battle of New Orleans University program or demonstration or a scheduled program or demonstration at your period camp



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