Follow our Travels through

Freedom's Frontier
NATIONAL HERITAGE AREA
Mid-March in Freedom’s Frontier National Heritage Area was windy – and just a bit chilly – as Managing Director **Julie McPike**, Education and Interpretation Manager **Liz Hobson** and Communications and Marketing Manager **Sonia Smith** left Gladstone, Missouri, on Wednesday, March 22, 2017, headed toward the **Confederate Memorial State Historic Site** in Higginsville, Missouri. There they met up with Executive Director **Jim Ogle** and Partnership Coordinator **Adam Newhard** who were traveling in from Lawrence, Kansas for the March Fieldwork Day.

If you’ve been to Higginsville, you may recognize this highway sign.

In honor of the sign, you’ll see this yellow finger pointing the way instead of the arrow you usually see as you Follow our Travels.
Interpretive panels near the cemetery provide a lesson about Confederate flags.

“The site was once home to the Confederate Soldiers Home of Missouri, which provided comfort and refuge to 1,600 Civil War veterans and their families for nearly 60 years. The site’s 135 acres include numerous lakes to fish in as well as walking trails and places to picnic.” (From the Missouri State Parks website.)
Sonia and Liz in the panoramic photo Julie took to show how large the cemetery is.

Julie and Liz looking at interpretive panels that show historic photos of the buildings still on the grounds.

Adam and Jim reading about flags.
Next stop: Concordia Area Museum, 802 S. Gordon Street, Concordia, Missouri. Here, staff met with the Concordia Historical Society President Richard Liarmore, Secretary Don Dittmer, and historical society members Alta "Sammy" Thomas, and Deanna Rehmsmeyer.

Concordia was settled by German Immigrants, and incorporated in 1877.

The Concordia Area Heritage Society was formed in 1984 to preserve cultural and historical materials for the area.

Some of the items on display at the museum, including this quilt, which was buried for safekeeping during a Bushwhacker raid in Autumn of 1862, and this trunk that immigrant Jacob Pape brought with him from Germany. His name can still be seen, painted on the outside.
Liz and Sonia played musical tones on the collection of doorbells donated by the family of Emil Deke, while Historical Society member Deanna Rehmsmeyer looked on, amused. The doorbells were made in Germany about 1920-30.

Concordia had its own pointing finger.

On the Menu: Country Ham Dinner, served with hot German Potato Salad and Sweet Sauerkraut, with Black Pumpernickel or Rye – $1.75
One of the best things about Fieldwork Day is getting the personal tours of museums, and hearing about all the great ideas that our partners have for programs and projects. Staff talked over some oral history project ideas with the museum volunteers during our trip, and hopes to work with them to make the ideas come to life!
As much as we enjoyed the Concordia Museum, it was time for lunch (and you know how much we enjoy that!) We ate at **Heroes Restaurant & Pub**, 107 West Pine Street, Warrensburg, before starting our tour in this Missouri town.

We had heard that we should try the “Unknown,” and that we wouldn’t be sorry. It turned out that the “Unknown” wasn’t a surprise food item as we had assumed, but a “Hurricane-like” mixed drink. We skipped it this time, so we wouldn’t be sorry.

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**Jim’s Fiesta Fries**
Fresh Idaho cut french fries smothered with cheese, taco meat, lettuce, black olives, tomatoes, scallions and sour cream. 8.99

Sonia’s selfie in one of the antique mirrors on a wall, and her lunch – some kind of taco salad and fries.

Liz’s lunch: chicken sandwich with pickles? Not sure, exactly, but everyone had agreed that the food was tasty!
Our first of two stops in Warrensburg was the Old Public Square, 302 N Main Street, where visitors will find the Johnson County Historical Society Museum, and Johnson County Historic Courthouse Museum (original courthouse: 1838). If you want to tour the museums, be sure to call ahead so you can schedule a tour (660) 747-6480.

This statue of Old Drum is in front of the Historic Johnson County Courthouse, but there is another one in front of the current courthouse in Warrensburg, and also a monument on the bank of Big Creek, near where Old Drum was killed. Warrensburg celebrates Old Drum Days in April.

Look what we found on a chair inside the Historic Courthouse (We didn’t put it there, really!) You can get your own map of Freedom’s Frontier National Heritage Area by calling (785) 856-5300, or sending a request via email at information@freedomsfrontier.org.

Jim checking out the story of Old Drum. You can read all about this dog and the famous court cases (there were four trials) concerning this example of man’s best friend in 1869-70. Here’s a link to the story of The Death of a Dog, The Birth of a Legend on the Warrensburg Convention and Visitors Bureau website.

Liz really wanted to bang the gavel, but settled for getting her photo taken as the presiding judge at the Historic Courthouse.
We visited the Johnson County Historical Society Museum next door to the Historic Courthouse, in the Mary Miller Smiser Heritage Library. There, visitors can see county artifacts; a research facility for local history, genealogy, and local records archives; a restored one-room school, and a collection of agricultural implements and locally manufactured lawn mowers. This is one of the few historical societies in Missouri to have pre-Civil War records; be sure to ask about how the records were stolen to keep them safe.
Our final stop of the day was to meet with Courtney Stephens, Director of Tourism. She signed a partnership pledge while we were visiting and the Warrensburg Convention and Visitors Bureau, 200 S. Holden Street, became an official partner of Freedom’s Frontier National Heritage Area.
If you haven’t yet made your travel plans for where you’ll be on August 21, 2017, when a total eclipse will sweep over the country, Warrenton, Missouri is in the path of totality. Which means anyone in the northern part of Warrenton, Missouri will experience total darkness in the middle of the day. Find out more about what’s happening in Warrenton on the CVB’s webpage.

You can also watch the eclipse in St. Joseph, Missouri, which will have the longest period of totality in Freedom’s Frontier, and on the Kansas side of the heritage area, your best viewing opportunity is in Atchison. For information on the eclipse’s path across the nation, check here.

As always, this is the part of the tour where we thank our partners, and other sites, that allow us to come in and get the inside information about the many places in 41 counties in western Missouri and eastern Kansas that make up the heritage area. You can find out more information about partnering sites by visiting our webpage at www.freedomsfrontier.org, and clicking on the “Places to See” tab. We hope that you will visit these sites and continue to follow our travels!