

The Town Where Matt Lived Turns 200

Not many towns can claim their 200th anniversary twice, yet Elkton has that distinction as it actually was settled twice. Once at the confluence of Richland Creek and Elkton River and a second time just a few miles up river at the location it occupies today. In 1808 James and William Price settled on the east side of Richland Creek near the mouth on land that their father, Isaac Price, and his heirs had been granted in 1784 as payment for Isaac's Revolutionary War services. This was the first known white settlement in Giles County and the first settlement of Elkton. In 1811 a Bill was considered in the Tennessee General Assembly to authorize the laying off of a town at this location but Isaac



Smoke rises from the chimney of Matt Gardner's house in the background of this early 1900's photo of fishermen on Elk River. The original of this photo hangs at city hall. Photo courtesy Elkton City

Price died without a legal will and plans to build the trading town of "Elkville" played out. Some area residents came to believe that the location was unsuitable because it was marshy and sometimes under water. In 1812, 136 signers subscribed to a petition that the town be located four miles farther up river. The petitioners asked that a town be established on Elk River where the Main Post Road from Pulaski to Huntsville crossed Elk River at Manefees Ford, about four miles above Richland Creek. This change in location was called Elkton. The name "Elkville" was never adopted for the Price settlement and it became known as "Lower Elkton" and the newer town was known as "Upper Elkton." Lower Elkton became a shipping point for both Giles and Limestone (Alabama) Counties for a number of years, but the eventual cessation of shipping by flat boat caused the population of Lower Elkton to dwindle and Upper Elkton eventually became known as Elkton.

Courtesy the Elkton Historical Society

Renovation Update

Renovations to the house and grounds continue with work beginning on the chimney. Renovation specialist Tim Miller of Miller Construction is currently working to restore and prevent further leakage and damage before the rainy season starts. Next, the well house is scheduled to be secured and restored by the end of May.

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For More Information

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Launch of Our New Website

The Matt Gardner Homestead Museum would like to thank Tennessee Civil War National Heritage Area and the Tennessee Wars Commission for grants received in support of our new website. Without the support of these two organizations we would not have the website that you, our members, supporters, and friends, are able to view today. The website will give internet visitors information on the progress of restoration as well as programs and events that the museum will be sponsoring. It will give historians, scholars, teachers and students

a venue to exploring the history and heritage of Matt Gardner, his family, the homestead museum, and of Elkton. Again, we thank both organizations and deeply appreciate this opportunity that their grants have provided.

We would also like to thank Lynn Machamer of Pixel Influx WebDesign, Huntsville, Alabama for designing this wonderful website. Lynn took our many jumbled inputs and created a beautiful website for our museum. Great job Lynn, many thanks!



The Matt Gardner Homestead Museum website will soon be a reality. Currently in the final design process, it is expected to be up and functional by May 1, 2008. Keep your eye on the web address below!

www.mattgardnerhomestead.org

Website Designed and Maintained by
Pixel Influx, Huntsville, Alabama

Upcoming Museum Events

The museum will be participating in the 200th Anniversary of the settlement of Elkton on June 7, 2008. Plans are being made to include activities for adults and children including several cultural events along with a membership drive booth and a little sweet treat for everyone!

Upcoming Elkton Events

APRIL 19 — Elkton Mile Long Yard Sale

MAY 10 — Decoration Day at Elkton Cemetery— EHS plans a Saturday event to commemorate many of the first settlers of Elkton who are buried in the restored portion of the cemetery.

JUNE 7 — Elkton's 200th Birthday Celebration

Call 931-468-0668 or www.elktonhistory.net for details.

Welcome to Our Newest Members

James Chupp, Langston, OK

Charles and Kym Stone, Indianapolis, IN

Karen Grays, Indianapolis, IN

Bernard and Gloria Rushing, Detroit, MI

Gladys Smith, Detroit, MI

We are happy to welcome new members to our organization.

