



ORVA NEWS

Ouachita River Valley Association

"Dedicated to Quality of Life in the Ouachita Valley"

2023 Convention Edition

ORVA is a non-profit organization that promotes the development of water and land resources projects that are engineered and economically feasible, environmentally sustainable, and publicly acceptable that enhance the general welfare of the people in the Ouachita River Basin in Arkansas, Louisiana, and the Nation.

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2023 Convention Edition

Ouachita-Black Rivers Navigation Project

ORVA is proud to issue this special Convention Edition as part of its 56th annual meeting.

This issue includes articles from our Arkansas congressional delegation. Please see those articles from Arkansas' two United States senators: John Boozman and Tom Cotton and U.S. Congressman Bruce Westerman, representing Arkansas' 4th Congressional District.

We briefly discuss river tonnage, dredging, current ORVA highlights, some interesting tidbits of information concerning Hot Springs, and other historical articles from the Ouachita River Basin. We had the opportunity to discuss the Ouachita River with one of our senior river captains. It is our great pleasure to introduce Capt Matt Hall to our readers, although Matt is no stranger to ORVA or to many of our membership. We hope you will find this newsletter both interesting and informative.

We anticipate great things happening the last few months of this fiscal year and into the next. The movement of fuel on the river has increased tremendously and the movement of rock north is in earnest. We will see increased project work by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers through the Public Law (PL) 84-99 Project. Harvest will soon be in full swing and we're anticipating an increase in the movement of all agricultural commodities. We will hit that 1 million metric ton mark which is so critical to funding. School is starting, trucks are moving; be safe, stay cool, enjoy the remaining summer.





Significant investment from the public and private sectors in South Arkansas is helping drive economic development in the region. It's poised to continue growing as defense companies increase production of munitions in Camden, so the infrastructure must be able to meet the evolving needs of residents and this critical industry. That means advancing policies to improve water infrastructure in the area. I am proud to work alongside the Ouachita River Valley Association (ORVA) to advocate for a strong navigation system to ensure preservation and foster recreation along the Ouachita River.

We made some great progress in the *2020 Water Resources and Development Act (WRDA)* by increasing access to clean drinking water through a provision requiring the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) to add water supply as a purpose for the Ouachita-Black River navigation project.

We've all read the stories about the changing water levels in the West. We must take steps to ensure Arkansans have access to a safe and reliable source of drinking water today and into the future. Passage of WRDA makes that goal more achievable for residents in South Arkansas.

WRDA is a critical tool to improve preservation of our water resources. This legislation supports investments in ports and inland waterways, authorizes flood control and improves Corps programs. It's important that Congress reauthorizes it biennially.



In recent weeks, the Senate Environment and Public Works (EPW) Committee kicked off the process of writing the next WRDA bill. I have helped advance this measure in the past and will continue to do so next year.

We must provide the Corps the funding and resources to support its mission. As a member of the EPW Committee, I have the ability to conduct oversight of the Corps and help ensure the agency is intentional in its decision-making to preserve and protect the waters of South Arkansas. One popular pastime in Arkansas is enjoying activities out on the water, such as boating, swimming and fishing. The Corps is one of the nation's largest federal outdoor recreation providers, including Lake Ouachita and Lake DeGray. Many Corps facilities were constructed decades ago and are in need of repairs. Improving Corps-managed recreation sites will allow Arkansans to continue enjoying these locations for years to come. That's why I'm championing the *LAKES Act*, bipartisan legislation that would allow Corps-managed sites to reinvest the recreation fees where they are collected, driving economic growth forward. Allowing local

Corps leaders to manage how funds are reinvested in their sites will better support the communities near these well-liked destinations.

These sites are significant to the region and the state as a whole, and I am proud to support the viability of these popular destinations.

I look forward to continuing the partnership with ORVA in the Senate and meeting with members again soon. We've all had to make changes, but my team and I have remained working side-by-side to enhance navigation, preservation and recreation in the Ouachita River basin. When we invest in critical bodies of water, we all win.

In 1886, the Chicago White Stockings baseball franchise began spring training in Hot Springs. Other major league teams soon followed suit and the city served as a major site of spring training until the 1920's. Rumors are that the franchises moved to places with warmer winter climates such as Florida and Arizona, but some speculate it was because of the gambling and night life.



The **MV City of Natchez** making a rounding turn operating on the Ouachita River near the Railroad Bridge at Columbia, Louisiana, July 2023.

Lenth/Beam: 122/34m

Picture courtesy of Clay Manly.

Exploring the Red, Ouachita, and Black Rivers – the Hunter and Dunbar Expedition

The Hunter-Dunbar expedition was one of only four ventures into the Louisiana Purchase commissioned by President Thomas Jefferson. Between 1804 and 1807, President Jefferson sent Lewis and Clark into the northern regions of the Purchase; Zebulon Pike into the Rocky Mountains, the southwestern areas, and two smaller forays; Thomas Freeman and Peter Custis along the Red River; and William Dunbar and Dr. George Hunter to explore the “Washita” River and “the hot springs” in what is now Arkansas and Louisiana.

While the Ouachita River expedition was not as well known as the Lewis and Clark expedition, nor was it as geographically and environmentally as vast as Lewis and Clark's, Hunter and Dunbar's expedition is significant for several reasons. It provided Americans with the first scientific study of the varied landscapes as well as the animal and plant life of early southern Arkansas and northern Louisiana. The Hunter and Dunbar expedition was considered the most purely scientific collection of data among all of the Louisiana Purchase explorations.

During the Civil War, Arkansas raised more than 48,000 men for the Confederacy and more than 8,000 for the Union. Federal units consisted of more than 5,500 African-Americans and pro-Union sympathizers. Although Arkansas had the third smallest white population of all the Confederate states, more whites joined the Union Army from that state than any other besides Tennessee.

Congressman Bruce Westerman

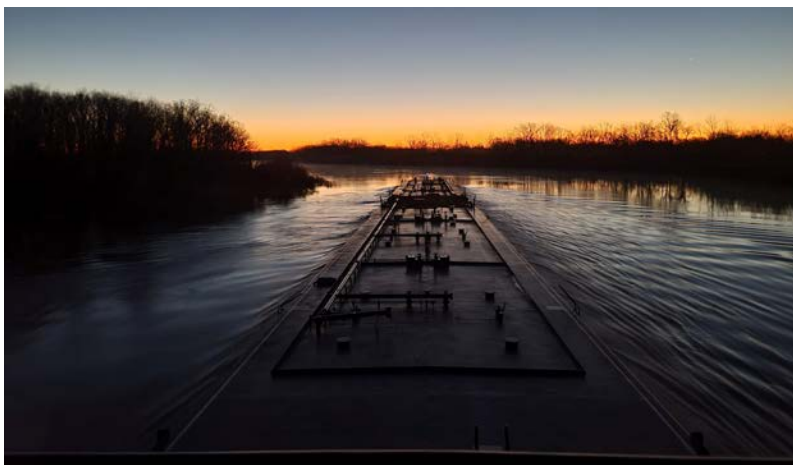
United States Representative for Arkansas' 4th Congressional District

Arkansas and our region are blessed with abundant vital clean water resources, including the Arkansas, Red, Ouachita, White, and Mississippi Rivers. However, it is no secret that America faces unique water supply challenges. The devastating wildfires and worsening water supply in Western states such as California, Colorado, and Nevada indicate growing water challenges nationwide.

Providing reliable and clean water sources for Americans is as much an environmental issue as an economic one. In the 21st century, the State of Arkansas will need to continue to protect the quality of the state's water supplies and maintain adequate amounts of water for human use and the whole ecology of living things within Arkansas. This is why I am dedicated to promoting initiatives in Congress that better our communities, both at home and across the nation, especially those that reside along our rivers.

In the Water Resources Development Act of 2022, we successfully supported a modification of the law to ensure that water supply was an authorized purpose of any U.S. Army Corps of Engineers projects on the Ouachita and Black Rivers. This allows the Corps to work with local stakeholders to ensure the Ouachita River Valley can receive the funds needed for such water supply projects.

As Chairman of the House Natural Resources Committee, providing ample water supply and improving water infrastructure is a top priority. I look forward to working with ORVA to bolster water infrastructure for all Americans.

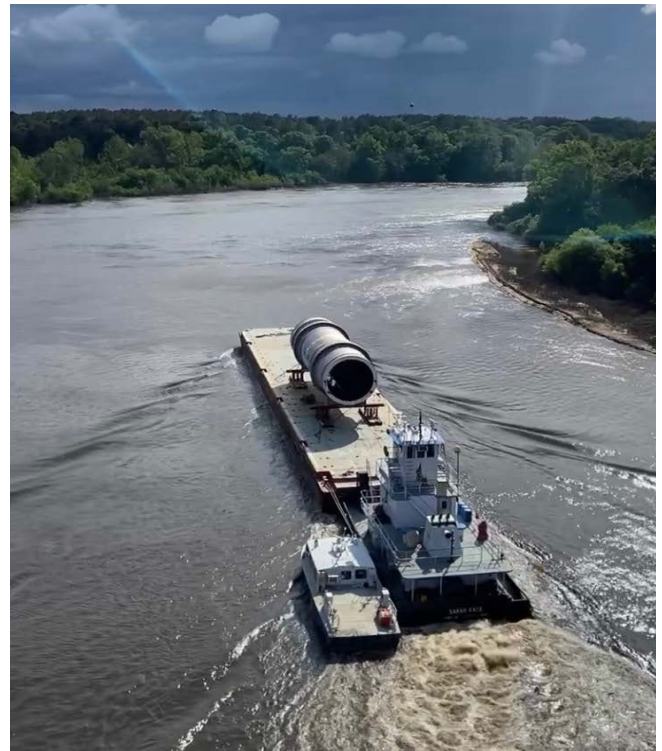


This beautiful picture taken during a late spring sunset depicts a fuel barge moving up the beautiful Ouachita River.

ORVA is proud to recognize senior Captain **Matt Hall**, a wheelman with Parker Towing in our "Souls of the River" feature in this newsletter. Please see page 19 for this article.



Big Move on the Ouachita



Shown here are pictures of the 300-ton kiln traveling on the Ouachita River. The pictures were taken by Clay Manly at the Railroad Bridge over the Ouachita River south of Columbia, Louisiana. The photo on the left looks south as the kiln travels north and the right photo shows the kiln headed north to Crossett Harbor. From these pictures we get a good idea of the enormity of the size of the

kiln. Onlookers initially believed the kiln to be a piece of military hardware.

According to the Arkansas Democrat-Gazette, the kiln will be used to safely dispose of "complex waste streams" through thermal treatment, operating at extremely high temperatures with the ability to rotate at different angles "to ensure that all waste materials are properly treated."

According to Veolia – the company that will operate the hazardous waste treatment plant in Gum Springs – the facility will have the lowest emissions of any plant of its kind and represents an investment of \$300 million in the state.

The kiln, manufactured in Italy, shipped across the Atlantic Ocean to New Orleans, where it arrived on April 15. From there, it was loaded onto a barge on the Mississippi River, traveled to the Ouachita River and made its way up to the Port of Crossett.

Once at Crossett, the kiln's final phase of movement was slow and cumbersome. The convoy, traveling at an agonizing pace, included civilian pickup trucks, a set of push and pull trucks, four bucket trucks and a suspension beam dual lane transport trailer which carried the kiln to its final destination at Gun Springs.

The Hunter-Dunbar Louisiana Purchase Expedition

Reports of the expedition from both Hunter and Dunbar indicate that the hot springs had become an important site for people seeking relief from their various ailments and infirmities. The expedition met several individuals who had either been to the springs or were on their way to bathe in its warm waters. When the explorers arrived at the hot springs, they found evidence that people had lived there for periods of time to take advantage of the location's healing waters.



The kiln moves through Union County on its way to its final destination in Gum Springs, AR.

The Louisiana Expedition explorers Dunbar and Hunter eventually made it to the springs. There they began a month-long study of the water properties and geological and biological features of the healing waters they had heard so much about from visitors along the way. From their study, they decided that there were four principal and two inferior springs in the geologic complex. Water temperatures measured an average of between 148 and 150 degrees. Even with their scientific experiments and calculations, they could not determine the source of the hot water.

Former home run king Hank Aaron, the last Negro League player to make it to a major league roster, came to Hot Springs in 1952 to play in the Negro League World Series as a member of the Indianapolis Clowns. Players Josh Gibson, Satchel Paige, Cool Papa Bell, Monte Irvin, and Buck Leonard all made their way to Hot Springs; famous for its thermal bathhouses and many gangster hideouts. They all made it to the National Baseball Hall of Fame.

Tonnage Report

Tonnage data for the first six months of calendar year 2023 looks very promising. When compared to 2022 data of the same period, we appear to be on the glide path to exceed the one million metric ton mark. Shown for comparison are the first six months of calendar years 2023 and 2022.

Jonesville 1/1/2023 – 6/30/2023			
Commodity	Upbound (KTONS)	Downbound (KTONS)	Total YTD (KTONS)
Gasoline Incl Aviation (Except Jet)	198.000		198.000
Residual Fuel Oil	182.400		182.400
Fertilizers	9.000		9.000
Limestone	131.200		131.200
Soybeans		17.600	17.600
Machinery/Bulkheads (Not Electric)	2.970	2.390	5.360
Other	.512	.001	.513
Total	524.082	19.991	544.073

Jonesville 1/1/2022 – 6/30/2022			
Commodity	Upbound (KTONS)	Downbound (KTONS)	Total YTD (KTONS)
Gasoline Incl Aviation (Except Jet)	96.200		96.200
Residual Fuel Oil	89.800		89.800
Limestone	134.432		134.432
Sorghum Grains		19.200	19.200
Soybeans		19.200	19.200
Machinery/Bulkheads (Not Electric)	4.150	4.550	8.700
Other	.227	.013	.240
Total	324.809	42.963	367.772

The numbers presented in the graphs below represent “Upbound” and “Downbound” tonnage (reflected in thousands of tons) on the Ouachita at the Jonesville Lock for the periods January 1 – June 30, 2023 and 2022. Data derived from the Jonesville Lock and Dam is selected because it is a good representation of tonnage on the river.

The above data reflects a tremendous increase (more than double) in fuel shipments on the Ouachita River. With the onset of harvest and river levels remaining steady, we remain confident that agricultural commodities (corn, soybeans, sorghum grains) will reach substantial levels this year. For all of calendar year 2022, we saw a total of 48,000 tons of corn in downbound movement on the river.

Farmers are gearing up, some are already cutting, and grain trucks are beginning to move in earnest. Initial indications are that corn production within the basin (for the most part) has beat the heat and the current drought conditions and yields are better than expected. (For our area farmers, we certainly hope so.) In addition, we are beginning to see a considerable movement of rock in upbound traffic for gravel surfacing of the Ouachita River Levee System. The majority of rock movement can be attributed to the Vicksburg District’s aggressive support of bank stabilization through the Public Law (PL) 84-99 Project.

Fighting for Defense Investment in Arkansas

Defense investment is essential to our state's economy and residents. Arkansas is home to many of the factory floors in America's arsenal of democracy, along with several military bases where our service members and allies train to defend the free world. As a member of the Senate Armed Services Committee, I am dedicated to ensuring that our state gets the defense investment it needs and Arkansans in uniform get the support they deserve.

In Fort Smith, the Department of Defense is investing millions of dollars to turn Ebbing Air National Guard Base into the home of the world's premiere stealth fighter. In the years to come, aviators from allied nations around the world will soon come to Arkansas to train and learn to fly the F-35 fighter.

This project will bring major economic opportunities to our state for decades to come. It's expected to add as much as \$1 billion to the local economy, and bring an estimated 1,500 service members and their families to our state. They will soon be shopping in local stores, eating in local restaurants, and exploring the outdoors of our Natural State, including the beauty of the Ouachita River valley. That will mean more jobs and new businesses in Arkansas.



Senator Tom Cotton of Arkansas

Some of our country's most sophisticated and cutting-edge weapons and munitions manufacturers operate in Camden, Arkansas. Workers in Camden help manufacture, and build components for the SM-3, Javelin, Tomahawk, THAAD, SM-6, GMLRS, HIMARS, Patriot, ATACMS, and PrSM rockets and missiles. These Arkansans are forging and designing the instruments of our national defense that are being used to protect American interests around the world, including in Ukraine and Taiwan.



Unfortunately, Camden companies can't expand production or hire more workers due to chronic uncertainty arising from year-by-year contracting. Instead of signing reliable multi-year contracts which would encourage business creation and growth, D.C. bureaucrats have long insisted on maximum flexibility and short-term purchases.

I changed that. During negotiations for last year's National Defense Authorization Act—our nation's annual defense bill funding the Pentagon—I secured multi-year contracts for several categories of munitions, including HIMARS, ATACMS, GMLRS and Patriot missiles. This is good for Arkansas' workers and America's defense. I continued to advocate for expanded production and funding for these missiles in this year's bill.



I am also working to improve the lives of thousands of Arkansan service members and over 200,000 veterans that call our state home. Along with this year’s defense bill which includes a five percent pay raise for service members, I’ve cosponsored legislation that would improve rural health care access for veterans, expand benefits for our veterans wounded in combat, and provide more funding for the VA. This will help service members and their families withstand inflation and will get veterans the care they deserve.

support our great military, and we will enthusiastically continue this tradition in the years to come.

Defending America is part of our state’s identity and economy. Arkansans are proud to



Iron Mountain Lodge and Marina on DeGray Lake, **Mountain Harbor Resort and Spa** on Lake Ouachita, **Self Creek Lodge and Marina** on Lake Greeson now make up our Tri-Pennant Family of Resorts. These Arkansas resorts are family owned and operated, and have over five decades of lake resort management experience. Not only do they share the tri-pennant in each of their logos, but they also bring you their heritage of offering the finest in Arkansas resort facilities and personal service. All three resorts are also long-time ORVA members! We thank them for their many years of service and support!

Dredging

Funding is not the issue with dredging for this fiscal year! The District still has available FY 2022 funding in addition to FY 2023 funding. This available funding has allowed the Corps to advertise for three separate dredging contracts. The dredging contract for the Ouachita (the Ouachita-Black has its own contract this year) was advertised in late Spring and we were seeing some action mid-June at the traditional hot spots near Columbia, Louisiana. This is good and bad news: good that we have a separate contract; bad in that it will possibly be later in the year before we see any substantial dredging.



But the other bit of (not so good) news is that we still have a mussel issue (threatened and endangered species of mussel) lingering north of the state line toward Camden. We had hoped to see a resolution to that issue by now. With that issue pending, dredge operations were diverted to the Red.

We’re hopeful that dredging will soon commence when the US Fish and Wildlife Service gives the Corps the go-ahead to start dredging operations. The work season window is already small; it only gets smaller with this mussel issue.



Fort Lookout (above) and Fort Southerland (right) were listed on the National Register of Historic Places on April 19, 1994. Both were designated as National Historic Landmarks.

Redoubt E, named Fort Southerland, commanded the Bradley Ferry Road on the Ouachita River in the southeastern part of Camden, as well as approaches from the El Dorado direction. Many historians believe this fortification, which can be seen in Fort Southerland Park, is actually Fort Diamond and Fort Southerland was actually Redoubt D.

Camden's Forts Lookout and Southerland

Between January and March 1864, Confederate soldiers (most likely from Walker's Texas Division) and slaves from the surrounding area constructed a series of five redoubts intertwined with supporting trenches and rifle pits on the high points around Camden.

Redoubt A, the northernmost fortification, was named Fort Lookout as it contained a battery of six artillery pieces and commanded a bend in the Ouachita River above Camden. The fortification and much of the earthworks still survive today.

Redoubts B, C, and D have all been lost to history.



When Major General Frederick Steele's Union army marched into southern Arkansas in March and April 1864 with plans to join another Union army at Shreveport prior to invading Texas, Major General Sterling Price abandoned the Confederate works at Camden to confront Steele's Yankees in battles at Okolona, Elkins' Ferry, and Prairie D'Anne. After the latter fight, near modern-day Prescott (Nevada County), Steele diverted his line of march and occupied Camden in hopes of finding supplies in the area for his half-starved army. They entered Camden on April 15, 1864, and Union soldiers worked to improve the city's defenses by constructing additional rifle pits to support the redoubts.

After suffering serious losses in battles at Poison Spring and Marks' Mills, Steele decided on April 26 to abandon Camden and make his way back to Little Rock, reaching there on May 3 after fighting a desperate rear-guard action at Jenkins' Ferry on the Saline River. Confederate troops then reoccupied the Camden fortifications and continued to improve them, including the addition of the Camden Water Battery in late 1864.

Fort Lookout became the property of the Ouachita County Historical Society, and that organization is working to preserve and interpret the earthworks there while converting the 1960s

house in the center of the complex into a museum and visitor center. Fort Southerland is the centerpiece of Fort Southerland Park in southern Camden. Both earthworks remain remarkably well-preserved.

Kansas City, Missouri may be the birthplace of baseball's Negro Leagues (founded in 1920), but Hot Springs might be considered to be the famously adopted getaway for Black ballplayers to hone their baseball skills. Babe Ruth, Jimmie Foxx, Hank Aaron, Gil Hodges, and Walter Johnson are a few of the baseball greats to play in Hot Springs. Their stay as well as that of players from the Negro Leagues is well-documented on the ***Hot Springs Historic Baseball Trail***.

Hot Springs National Park Interesting Facts

- ✓ The area which is now Hot Springs National Park first became part of the United States as part of the Louisiana Purchase.
- ✓ Hunter and Dunbar came to the Hot Springs in 1804 as part of their Louisiana Purchase Expedition. Their exploration included a four-week study of the hot springs, though the explorers were unable to discover the springs' water source.
- ✓ On April 20, 1832, President Andrew Jackson signed legislation designating Hot Springs as a reservation. In 1921, Congress changed Hot Springs' designation to national park. It is the country's only national park in an urban area.
- ✓ In 1878 a devastating fire destroyed much of the Hot Springs area.
- ✓ Hot Springs actually supports 47 naturally heated springs.
- ✓ Hot Springs National Park is often referred to as "America's Spa" because of its famous natural hot springs. In fact, the park and the surrounding area are tourist destinations for millions of people annually.
- ✓ Hot Springs is the boyhood home of President Bill Clinton.
- ✓ There are 26 Miles of walking paths and hiking trails inside Hot Springs National Park.
- ✓ Hot Springs National Park has a gangster museum. In the 1930's Al Capone, Meyer Lansky, Frank Costello, Albert Anastasia, and "Lucky" Luciano were a few of the famous "mafioso" visitors to the park.
- ✓ The water is safe to drink. In fact, there are several "jug fountains" throughout the park. The thermal water at Hot Springs National Park is nearly 4,000-year-old spring water in its natural state. They flow out of the ground at an average temperature of 143 degrees Fahrenheit and produce almost one million gallons of water a day.
- ✓ There are no endangered species within the park.
- ✓ The Springs are a result of a combination of rock types and fracture that are formed along with the Ouachita Mountains. Contrary to popular belief, they're not volcanic.

The Tate's Bluff Fortification



This 100 feet square earthen fort, was constructed on the bluff overlooking the confluence of the Little Missouri River and Ouachita River in northern Ouachita County. The construction of the fort was part of the overall Confederate strategy in the area. Its commanding position on the river was to prevent a suspected federal invasion from the vicinity of Little Rock. Although the federal invasion never materialized and combat action never occurred at the fort, its remains are still visible today.

Members of a team surveying the possible placement of a river gage at the Tate's Bluff bridge had the opportunity to tour the earthen fort. The team consisted of Dr. Corbet Lamkin,



ORVA Board of Directors and Commissioner, Ouachita River Commission; Mr. Shawn Dorfinger, General Manager, Ouachita Electric Corporation; Ms. Tabitha Clarke, Senior Services Hydrologist with the National weather Service in Little Rock; Mr. David Weeks, ORVA Executive Director; and the property owner, Dr. Edmond Bacon, a professor of Biology at the University of Arkansas at Monticello.

Donna Axum Whitworth – Miss America 1964 – was the first Miss Arkansas to win the title.



Hot Springs' Famous Gangster (Perhaps)

Hot Springs was a prime tourist area for gangsters throughout the 1930's due to the illicit gambling, prostitution, and bootlegging. Perhaps the most famous gangster to visit the town was **Al Capone**. He first came to Hot Springs in the early 1920's during the Prohibition era, and he and his boss, Johnny Torrio, stayed at the Majestic Hotel. Capone and his men came to town to strike deals with moonshiners in the area. Later, Capone purchased a dairy outside of town and turned the unproductive business into an economic goldmine – his personal moonshine distillery. Capone, mimicking the operations of the Mountain Valley Spring Water Company (who had been distributing water from Hot Springs since 1871) bottled his moonshine in clear glass containers. He called his product Mountain Valley Water. He would then smuggle his bootleg liquor in tanker railroad cars.

The “new” Arlington Hotel opened its doors on New Year’s Day 1925. From that day forward when Capone came to town he often rented the entire 4th floor of the hotel for himself and his entourage. Al, along with his brother Ralph, were often known to frequent Hot Springs, where they enjoyed the gambling, nightlife, horse races at Oaklawn Park, golfing, and the many bathhouses. Capone often had as many as 40 men accompany him on his visits to Hot Springs, all of whom were known to be violent thugs in Chicago. While they were in the spa city, they were peaceful, polite, friendly, and appreciated as generous tippers.



The new Arlington Hotel, ca 1925

When Will We See Permanent Repairs to the H.K. Thatcher Lock and Dam?

H.K. Thatcher Lock & Dam, the northernmost navigation structure, features a 200-foot-long hinged crest gate that stretches across the Ouachita River. The gate stands roughly 5 feet high and, in normal conditions, has about a 1-foot head over the top. In late October 2021, lock operators noticed the gate was not able to hold the 77 ft pool level and the Vicksburg District’s Army Corps of Engineers began investigating the issue.

After investigating the gate and determining a way forward, district engineers successfully installed a “Poiree Needle System” on November 28, 2021 to repair the leak in the seal of the hinge crest gate. This temporary repair was later fortified with steel I-beams. It continues to hold, even with water levels reaching above the normal pool level on two separate occasions.

The temporary repair has become a long-term temporary repair. We are told that permanent repairs rank high on the Mississippi Valley Division’s priority list for Fiscal Year (FY) 2025. Originally estimated to begin repairs in FY 2024 at a cost of \$4M, that cost is now projected to run upwards of \$5M primarily due to inflation and loss of buying power.



Central Avenue in Hot Springs, Arkansas as it appeared in 1900.

People knew of the healing waters long before the Hunter and Dunbar Louisiana Purchase Expedition. The area, however, was well known for its illegal gambling beginning in the mid-1800’s. It really boomed following the Civil War. Gambling became even more prevalent in the 1930’s.

Not only did Hot Springs become popular for its bathhouses, but also for its gambling halls, saloons, and night life.

More than a year before Lewis and Clark returned from their northwest expedition, Dunbar and Hunter's journals reached the desk of President Thomas Jefferson. Their journals recorded not only scientific data and calculations, but also documented the many adventures and personal successes and trials of the 19 men of the expedition.

Louisiana Congresswoman Julia Letlow Announces Four Grants Bringing Over \$16 Million To Louisiana's Fifth District

Congresswoman Julia Letlow (LA-05) announced this past June news which will bring Louisiana's Fifth District \$16.3 million in grants. Congresswoman Letlow wrote numerous letters of support and worked diligently to bring the grants to fruition, as they all bring in funding specifically for projects located in the Fifth District.

The Ouachita River Valley Association is excited that the largest of the four grants will support critical infrastructure associated with the Ouachita River. The Columbia Port Commission in Caldwell Parish has been awarded \$10,537,798 for the Ouachita River and Louisiana Highway 165 Multimodal Connectivity and Safety Project. This project will fund land acquisition and construction activities for a Truck Parking Facility located near the inland Port of Columbia, Ouachita River, and Louisiana State Highway 165. This is much needed infrastructure, and will provide parking for approximately 50 commercial trucks and 100 cars.

The mission of ORVA is to promote the development of water and land resources projects that are engineered and economically feasible, environmentally sustainable, and publicly acceptable that enhance the general welfare of the people in the Ouachita River Basin in Arkansas, Louisiana, and the Nation.



ORVA's Major Interests

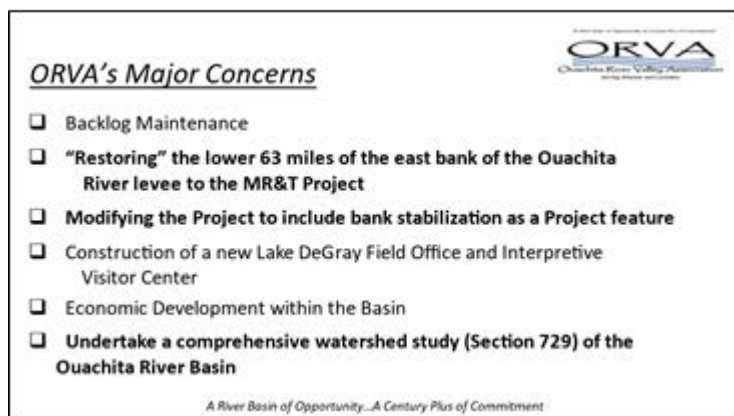
- Navigation
 - Water Supply – Municipal, Commercial, and Agricultural
 - Recreation and Conservation
 - Wastewater Discharge
 - **Flood Damage Reduction**
 - Economic Development

A River Basin of Opportunity...A Century Plus of Commitment

ORVA's major interests include navigation of the waterway, (commercial, industrial, and agricultural) water supply (a recent victory - adding this project purpose to the Ouachita-Black Rivers Navigation Project), recreation and conservation, wastewater discharge, flood damage reduction, and economic development within the Ouachita Basin.

The Association has six major concerns. These concerns, while not in any particular order, have remained constant for the last several years.

ORVA remains optimistic that some of what is presented in this slide will be authorized in some future version of the Water Resources and Development Act (WRDA) or addressed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.



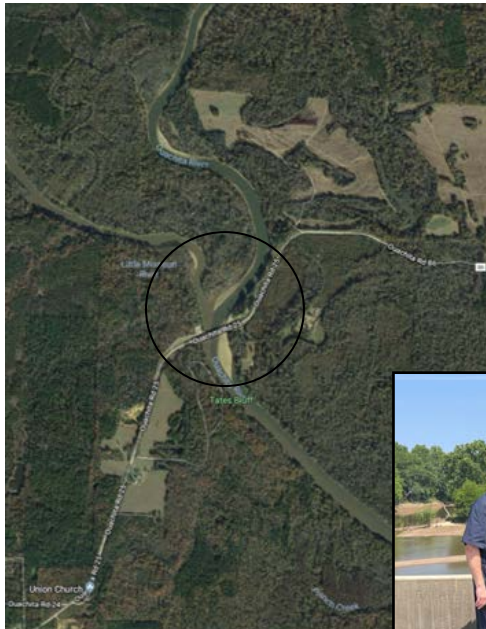
ORVA's Major Concerns

- Backlog Maintenance
- "Restoring" the lower 63 miles of the east bank of the Ouachita River levee to the MR&T Project
- Modifying the Project to include bank stabilization as a Project feature
- Construction of a new Lake DeGray Field Office and Interpretive Visitor Center
- Economic Development within the Basin
- Undertake a comprehensive watershed study (Section 729) of the Ouachita River Basin

A River Basin of Opportunity...A Century Plus of Commitment

President Thomas Jefferson included the journals of Dunbar and Hunter’s Louisiana Expedition – an accurate account of the region’s resources – in his report to Congress. Their journals became the first english description of the Ouachita River Basin in Arkansas and Louisiana. The details of the expedition were published in 1806; a document entitled, “Message from the President of the United States Communicating Discoveries Made in Exploring the Missouri, Red River, and Washita.”

Tate’s Bluff Bridge Gage



ORVA is working closely with partners and stakeholders to place a gage at the confluence of the Little Missouri River and Ouachita River in northern Ouachita County. The area is depicted in the picture on the left. Ouachita County Road 25 is prone to dangerous flooding during severe rain conditions; several traffic accidents and fatalities have occurred over the past several years due to high water flood events in this location. Traffic traveling between Chidester and Sparkman attempt to cross at the bridge location, unaware of flood conditions.



At an initial meeting with Mr. David Weeks, ORVA Executive Director, Ms. Tabitha Clarke, Senior Services Hydrologist with the National weather Service in Little Rock, provided two “flood” signs to the people of Ouachita County and the Chidester during a reconnaissance of the the presentation was made at the bridge on Oucachita County

Community. Later, Tate’s Bluff flood area, center of Tate’s Bluff

Highway Hwy 25. Pictured are Dr. Corbet Lamkin, Ouachita River Valley Association and Ouachita River Commission; Dr. Edmond Bacon, Professor of Biology, University of Arkansas at Monticello; Mr. Dorfinger, General Manager, Ouachita Electric Corporation; Ms. Clarke, Senior Services Hydrologist with the National weather Service in Little Rock; and Mr. David Weeks, ORVA Executive Director.



The pictures are taken from the center of the Tate’s Bluff bridge. In the left photo, the body of water on the left is the Little Missouri River and on the right is the Ouachita River. Heavy rains quickly create flooding conditions making travel extremely dangerous.



In the right picture, you will note the difference in the waters as they converge into the Ouachita.

OUACHITA RIVER VALLEY ASSOCIATION (ORVA) MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

I/We hereby subscribe the sum of \$_____ annually, payable in advance, for a one-year membership in support of the Ouachita River Valley Association, Inc. (ORVA). This membership becomes effective immediately and will remain in force so long as I/we remain a member/member in good standing and pay the membership dues when due each year.

Name: _____

Contact person (organizations only): _____

Mailing Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

E-mail address: _____

Telephone Number: _____ Fax Number: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Membership Fees:

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| _____ \$ 50 per year (Individual) | _____ \$ 200 Civic/Professional |
| _____ \$ 100 Small Business | _____ \$ 200 Public Entity |
| _____ \$ 500 Corporate | _____ \$1,250 User Fee |
| | _____ \$2,500 Primary User |

Please return completed form and cashier's check, money order, or personal check to:

**Ouachita River Valley Association
P.O. Box 913
Camden, AR 71711**



Tate's Bluff Bridge

This is a photo of the Tate's Bluff bridge during low water.

It is hard to comprehend but less than a mile up the road from the center of the bridge, high water reaches as much as 8 feet above the roadway during a heavy downpour.

Several accidents and fatalities have been reported in this location over the past several years. Gages are currently located on the Ouachita River at Camden, Arkansas to the south; on the Little Missouri River near

Boughton, Arkansas; and on the Ouachita River near Arkadelphia, Arkansas. ORVA is exploring options to place a gage at the Tate's Bluff bridge location. The placement of a gage at this bridge site would place it in the center of the other gages discussed above and provide area residents an early warning for potential danger. There are several possible gage options. Several are available from federal agencies and from non-profit organizations. Cost is the primary obstacle.



Here is a picture of another **Big Cat** taken from the Ouachita River during high water. Mike Bryant from Camden, who refers to himself as a "River Rat", has been fishing the Ouachita River his entire life. Mike is the Assistant Manager at the Camden Water Utilities.

Ouachita River Commission

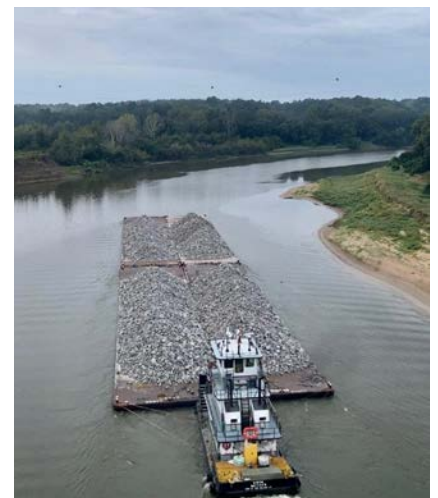
The Ouachita River Commission cooperates with the appropriate state and federal agencies for the study, planning, and implementation of needed improvements or projects, or both, to and along the main stem of the Ouachita River in Dallas, Hot Spring, Clark, Ouachita, Calhoun, Union, Bradley, and Ashley Counties, Arkansas.

Nine members are appointed by the Governor; one each from Dallas County, Hot Spring County, Clark County, Ouachita County, Calhoun County, Union County, Bradley County, and Ashley County. The ninth

member is the highest-ranking official of the Ouachita River Valley Association and a resident of Arkansas.

Another load of rock moves north as part of a U.S. Army Corps of Engineers project. Rock traffic on the Ouachita River is beginning to pick up considerably with a total movement estimate of 400 barges and 12-14 tons of rock per barge.

Photo courtesy of Clay Manly





A beautiful picture of fuel barges moving on the Ouachita near Columbia, Louisiana. Photo courtesy of Clay Manly.

Raffle Sponsors

Mountain Harbor Resort and Spa donates the Grand Prize for our annual drawing.

This year as in past years, **Mountain Harbor Resort and Spa** has graciously supported the Ouachita River Valley Association with a Gift Certificate for two nights' consecutive lodging in one of their two bedroom, two bath condominiums or cottages – with fully equipped kitchen, charcoal grill, color cable TV and a delightful view of the Ouachita National Forest or Lake Ouachita! Plus, to enjoy the beauty of Lake Ouachita, Mountain Harbor includes a day's use of a party barge, less fuel. To further compliment this package, Mountain Harbor includes a \$50 meal credit – breakfast, lunch, or dinner – in their lodge restaurant! This mini-vacation package is valued at \$1,450.00. Mountain Harbor Resort and Spa, sprawling across 900 acres on the shores of pristine Lake Ouachita, is Arkansas' premier lake resort, nestled deep within the heart of the Ouachita Mountain range.

Stoeger Industries donates one of their premier shotguns as the second item in this year's raffle. The inertia-driven **Model 3500 12 Gauge semi-automatic shotgun in Realtree Max-7 camouflage** is a waterfowler's dream! Rugged, weather-resistant construction and finish stand up to the worst conditions. The shotgun is chambered for 3 ½ inch shells but cycles 2 ¾ and 3 inch shells equally well without adjustment. Five chokes are included to deliver the kind of reliable versatility and value only Stoeger can provide. This shotgun is valued at \$850.00.





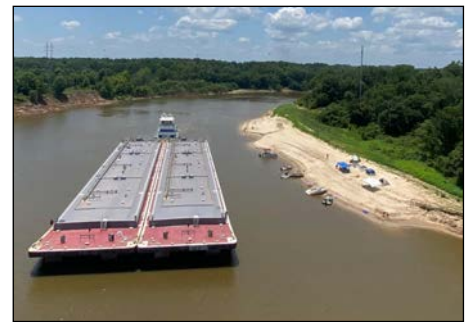
Souls of the River

(A discussion between Capt Matt Hall and David Weeks, ORVA Executive Director.)

Captain Matt Hall has been on the river since he was 17 years old. A senior Captain with Parker Towing, Matt remembers making his first run up the Ouachita as a deckhand some 35 years ago.

In our interview, we talked about a lot of things: dredging, new terminology for me (i.e., flanking), the Coast Guard, law enforcement and Wildlife and Fisheries presence (primarily around Columbia, Louisiana), and the interaction with customers, management, and government. I gathered that Matt loves meeting people and I suspect it can be said of him that he never meets a stranger.

A retiring fuel barge passes a “river beach north of the Columbia RR bridge.



Capt Hall operates primarily on the Red and Ouachita Rivers pushing mainly gas and diesel. A Simsport, Louisiana native, “the Red is my stomping grounds.” He noted that fuel shipments have doubled the output at Monroe; a fact confirmed on page 7 with the Tonnage Report.

At first blush, you would think Matt works a pretty easy

schedule. However, six hours on, six hours off, 28 days on and 28 days off is pretty hectic, considering the dangers of the river and the nature of the cargo for which he is responsible.



We dug a little deeper into dredging. Capt Hall commented that sometimes dredging hinders navigation with the dredge often having to move out of the way so traffic can pass, but it is absolutely necessary to maintain the channel. He noted the traditional hotspots on the Ouachita River above the railroad bridge at Columbia and the area below the lock at Columbia. The Corps is well aware of these hotspots and these areas have seen dredging operations already this past spring. Thanks to Capt Matt and our river operators, we are able to identify

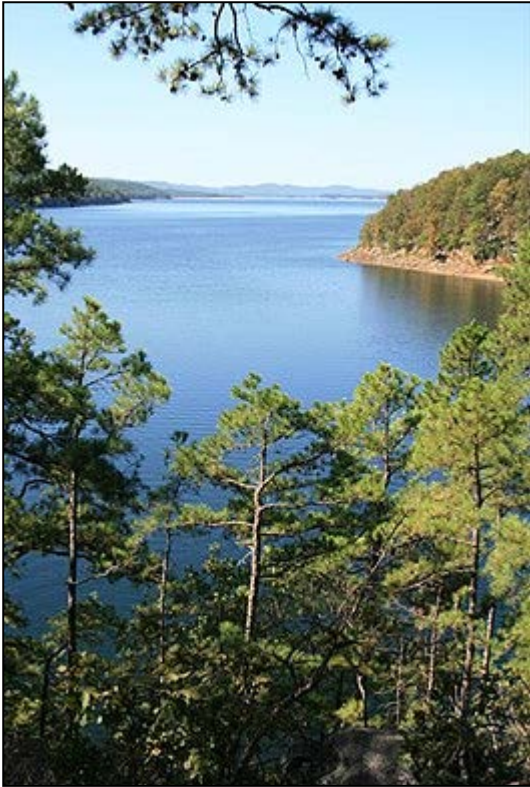
these areas in sufficient time to prevent any interdiction to the waterway.

One vivid memory is of the Ouachita flood in 2016. The necessary movement of gas and diesel – keeping Amerca rolling – mandated operating in daylight hours only and at “clutch” speed.



2016 Ouachita flooding

Capt Hall is on his Fifth Issue of his Pilot’s License. It’s quite evident that he enjoys his work. He mentioned that at some point in the future he wanted to stay in the industry but do something a little different. He said he does much of the same thing every day – but everything is different; “been there long enough to know that I don’t know everything.” With General Marine Services (GMS) (acquired by Parker Towing in 2022), he was the senior Captain with the Ouachita Division. Working with GMS was perhaps the highlight of his career: working alongside customers and management, helping make river decisions on the Ouachita.



Lake Ouachita – the Gem of the Natural State

Beautiful Lake Ouachita is nestled in the Ouachita Mountains just 10 miles west of Hot Springs Arkansas. The largest lake completely in Arkansas, Lake Ouachita provides the perfect getaway from the hustle and bustle of everyday life. With over 690 miles of shoreline, 40,000 acres of water and 20,000 acres of public land, it is completely surrounded by the Ouachita National Forest. Whether you are looking for quiet relaxation or need a little adventure, Lake Ouachita is the place for you.

Built by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers between 1946 and 1954 as part of a flood control, hydropower, and navigation project, authorized purposes now also include recreation, water supply, and fish and wildlife management. It is a reservoir created by the damming of the Ouachita River by the Blakely Mountain Dam. The land surrounding Lake Ouachita is part of the Ouachita National Forest, which encompasses 1.8 million acres in central Arkansas and southeastern Oklahoma.

Lake Ouachita offers an abundance of recreational opportunities. The Corps of Engineers maintains more than a thousand campsites and 18 boat ramps on Lake Ouachita. Largemouth Bass, Small Mouth Bass, Spotted Bass, Bream, Crappie, Catfish, Walleye and world class Trophy Striped Bass await the angler. Approximately 1.2 million people visit Lake Ouachita each year.

Lake Ouachita is located near two other lakes, Lake Hamilton and Lake Catherine. These three lakes, DeGray Lake to the near south, and the thermal springs of Hot Springs National Park make Hot Springs a popular tourist getaway.

"A River Basin of Opportunity. A Century Plus of Commitment"



Post Office Box 913
Camden AR 71711