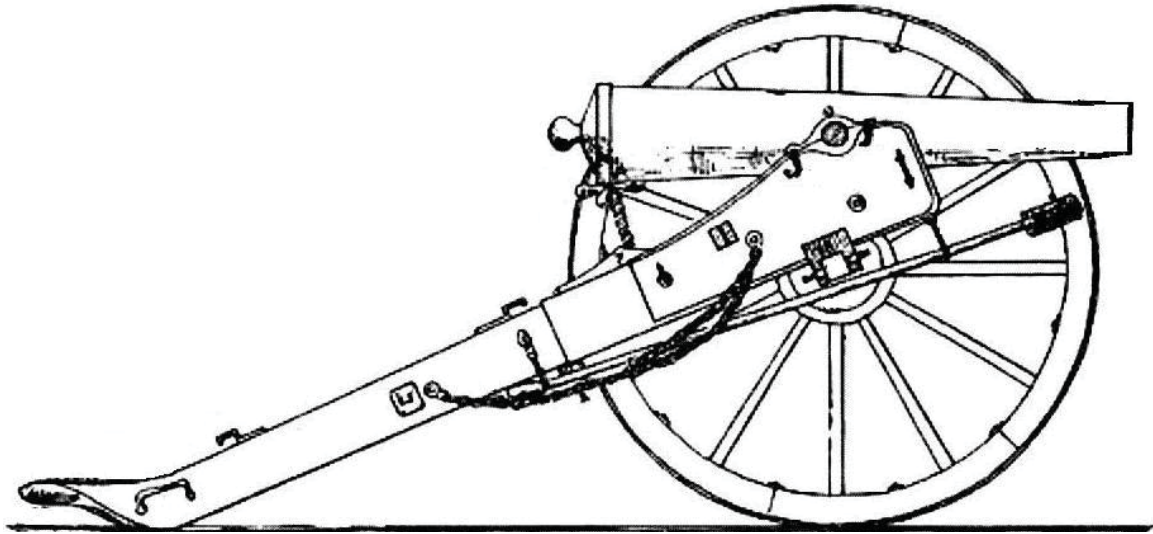


CONFEDERATE REUNION GROUNDS

state historic site



INTRODUCTION

The Confederate Reunion Grounds State Historic Site sits along the banks of the Navasota River in Limestone County. This area has offered shade and water to people meeting here for hundreds of years. After the **Civil War** ended, local **Confederate veterans** wanted to honor the memory of fallen soldiers. They also wanted a way to re-connect with friends they made during the war. In 1888, they organized a large **reunion** at the Joseph E. Johnston Camp 94 of the United Confederate Veterans. This site hosted the annual reunion meetings until 1946.

These annual reunions were held for four days in July or early August. Thousands of people came to these celebrations from all over Central and East Texas. Most of them camped overnight at the Reunion Grounds. Daytime activities included parades, concerts, speeches, games, and lots of food. The reunion also hosted **memorial** services and fundraisers to help the families of deceased Confederate soldiers. At night, dances were held in the large **octagonal** pavilion built in 1893.

In November 1920, “Colonel” Albert E. Humphreys struck oil near Mexia. He owned many successful oil wells and needed a lot of water to keep them running smoothly. In exchange for using the water from the Reunion Grounds, Humphreys constructed a clubhouse, a bathhouse, and other buildings there. For the next 15 years, the Reunion Grounds hosted a variety of social events, dances, and carnivals for the **community**, as well as the annual reunion celebration.

After the 1930s, gatherings continued at the Reunion Grounds, but on a much smaller scale. Families still occasionally came to swim or picnic, but by 1947, the grounds had fallen into disuse. After more than 35 years of community **preservation**, the State of Texas acquired the property and opened it to the public in 1983.

VOCABULARY WORDS

Look at the words and their definitions below. They are also written in bold letters in the Introduction.

annual—occurring or happening every year or once a year

Civil War—the war fought in the United States from 1861 to 1865 between northern (Union) and southern (Confederate) states. The Confederate states wanted to become a separate nation

community—a group of people who live near each other and share common history and interests

Confederate—from the Southern states that separated from the United States of America during the Civil War

memorial—something (like a speech, plaque, or monument) made to remember a person, place, or event

octagonal—having eight sides

preservation—protecting and caring for a place so that it is not harmed or destroyed

reunion—a group of people coming together after being apart for a period of time

veterans—former members of the military

CROSSWORD PUZZLE

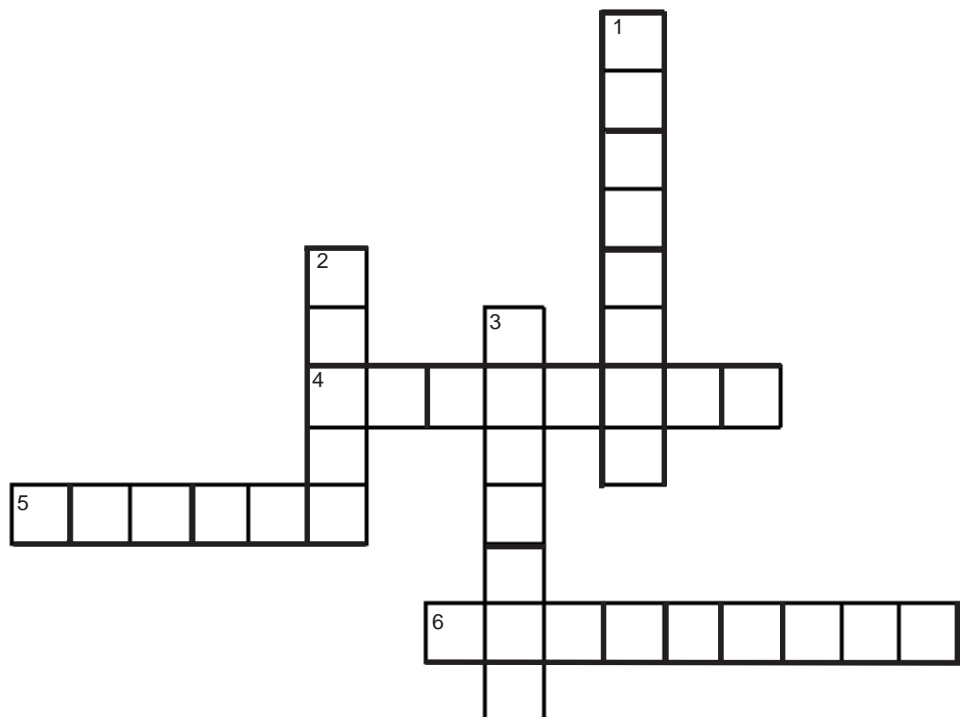
Use the Vocabulary Words to complete the sentences and puzzle below.

Down

1. The moving speech was an appropriate _____ to the fallen soldiers.
2. Northern and southern states fought against each other during the ____.
3. The children had not seen their grandparents in a very long time. They had a very happy _____.

Across

4. The _____ shared many of their stories and memories from the war.
5. The friends went to the _____ festival every summer.
6. The _____ was very excited about plans for a new library and recreation center.



YOUR COMMUNITY

Think about the area where you live and the people who live around you.

Describe your community: _____

Who are the people who live there? Where are the places you go? _____

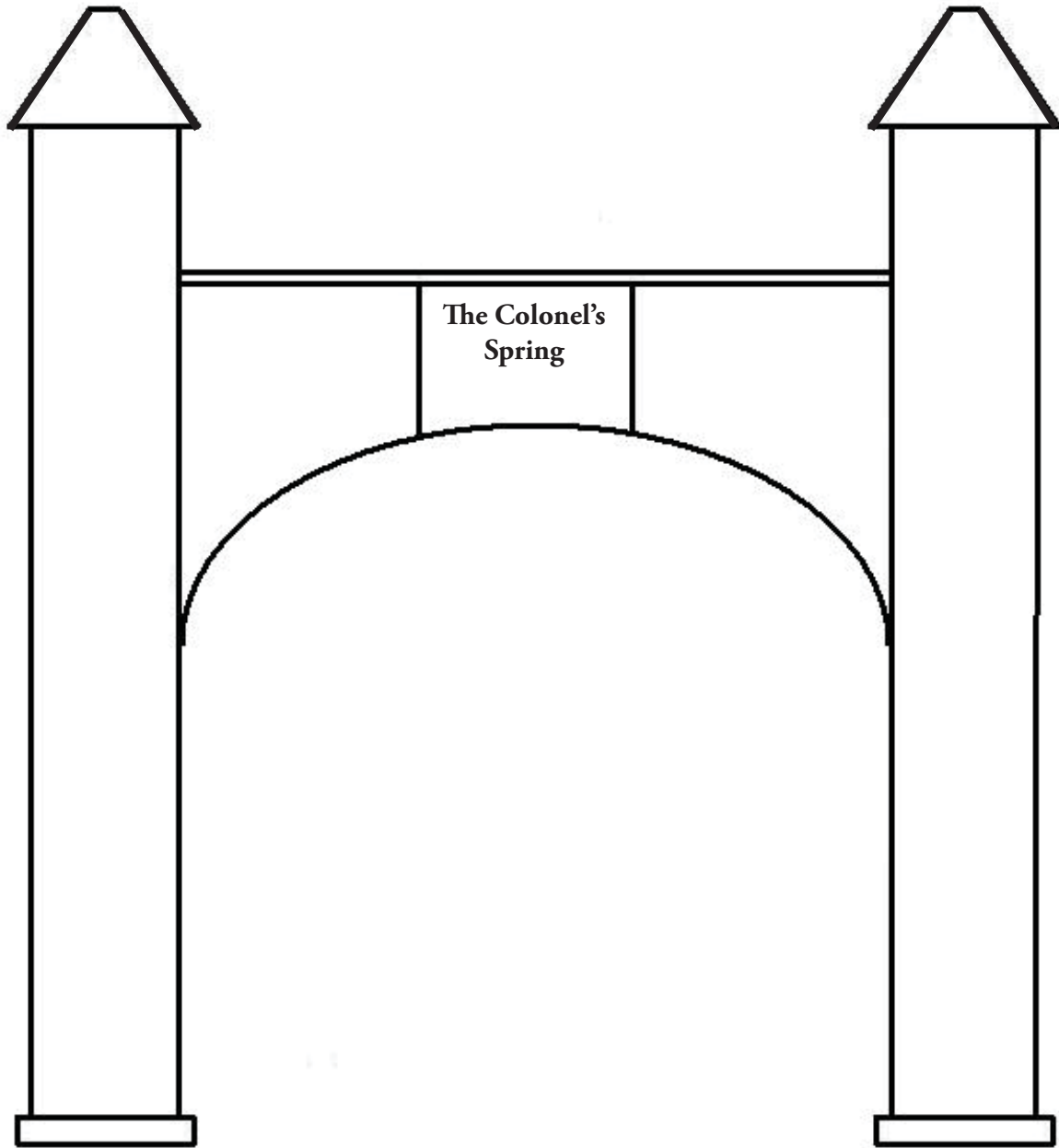
What special events or holidays does your community celebrate? _____

Draw your favorite place or event in your community.



Picture Yourself

Imagine that you are attending an annual reunion or other event at the Confederate Reunion Grounds more than 100 years ago. What are you wearing? What activities will you enjoy? Draw a picture of what you would be doing in the space provided below.



Write a short description of your picture below: _____



TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
real places telling real stories