

**ILLUSTRATIONS OF THE MARKSVILLE SITE:
A SEAC PUBLIC OUTREACH GRANT PROJECT**

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The 2006 Public Outreach Grant award provided funds for developing a series of new exhibits at the Marksville State Historic Site museum. The Marksville prehistoric archaeological site (16AV1) is a Middle Woodland Hopewell period complex of earthen embankments and mounds; a portion of the site is preserved as a State Historic Site. The Museum was established in 1953 and still presented some of the original exhibits. The grant application was occasioned by the creation of three views of the site by artist Martin Pate which could form the basis for a series of new exhibits drawing upon 50 years of subsequent research at the site.

The \$2,000 in grant funds, together with an additional \$350 from the Regional Program, was utilized to print new figures and text panels for the Museum exhibits. With these funds, 11 new exhibits were created and 13 exhibits revised and updated (see below); six exhibits remain unchanged. In addition, the entire organization of the museum was revised so that the exhibit sequence told a more coherent story about the site. The first third of the exhibit hall presents information specifically about the Marksville site, while the second third illustrates the broader Hopewell and Marksville culture, along with some exhibits on the archaeological investigations at the park. The final third of the exhibit hall examines the broader scope of human cultural history in the region to place the Marksville site in a broader context. A final exhibit introduces the visitor to the State's new driving tour of mound sites across northeast Louisiana.

The museum reorganization was completed in the late fall of 2006. During the first five months of 2007, the site had 3,799 visitors. The Historic Site's standard visitor evaluation form was revised at the beginning of 2007 to include three questions specifically addressing the new exhibits. All of the responses to the questions were positive and no respondent indicated a problem or concern with the exhibits. Twelve of 17 respondents "strongly agreed" with the question *Does the Museum provide a good understanding of the site and the Hopewell period*; the other five respondents "agreed" with this statement. All of the respondents felt that the paintings helped their understanding of the site. This question generated the most comments, ranging from "helps to see the reality of the site" to "very informative and well done." The final question asked whether the visitor had previously visited the museum and if so, whether the new exhibits provided a more informative experience? All of the respondents to this question (n=6) indicated yes.

The Marksville State Historic Site is one of the key sites on the state's new Mounds Heritage Trail driving tour. With publication of the tour pamphlet later this year, it is hoped that the site and museum will see an increase in visitation. In addition, a draft of a booklet about the site that includes a detailed walking tour around the mounds has been prepared and will hopefully be published in the near future. Both of these events will result in greater site visibility, thus increasing the significance of the Public Outreach Grant for improving the educational and interpretive value of the State Historic Site museum.

**LIST OF EXHIBITS IN THE MARKSVILLE STATE HISTORIC SITE MUSEUM
IN THE ORDER A VISITOR WILL SEE THEM**

Exhibits pertaining specifically to the site:

1. The Marksville Culture—wall display (new)
2. Diorama of the Marksville site—updated with new text
3. Geometry and astronomy at the Marksville site—new exhibit case
4. Birds-eye view of the Marksville site—painting by Martin Pate (new exhibit case)
5. Diorama models of mounds—updated with next text
6. Burial ceremony at Mound 4—painting by Martin Pate (new exhibit case)

Exhibits pertaining to the Hopewell/Marksville culture:

7. New Customs from the Old World—wall display updated with new text and images
8. Hopewell trade—unchanged exhibit case
9. Hopewellian Costume and Ornaments—unchanged exhibit case
10. The Marksville People—exhibit case updated with new text
11. Nature spirits—exhibit case updated with new text and new materials
12. Pipes and tobacco—exhibit case updated with new text
13. The Marksville Site is a typical Hopewellian ceremonial center—wall display updated with new text
14. WPA archaeology—painting by Martin Pate (new case exhibit)
15. What was found – the 1933 Excavations—exhibit case with updated text
16. Restoring the mounds—unchanged wall display
17. Replica of a palmetto hut and drying rack—unchanged exhibit
18. Daily Life in a Marksville village—painting by Martin Pate (new exhibit case)
19. The Use of Plants—exhibit case with updated text and exhibit materials
20. Cooking and food preparation—new exhibit case
21. Marksville hunter—unchanged wall exhibit
22. Shelter—unchanged wall exhibit

Exhibits pertaining to regional cultural history:

23. Culture History in the Lower Mississippi Valley—new wall display
24. Stone age crafts—exhibit case with new materials
25. Hunting and fishing—exhibit case with revised text and materials
26. Pottery making—exhibit case with revised text and materials
27. How pottery changed—unchanged exhibit case
28. Demonstration table—unchanged exhibit
29. Louisiana projectile points—new exhibit case
30. Louisiana Mounds Heritage Trail—new exhibit case
31. Recent excavations at the Marksville site—new exhibit case