

A Word About the National Register of Historic Places and the Red River Gorge

The **National Register of Historic Places** is a federal program that recognizes America's most important cultural resources. These objects and artifacts, buildings, landscapes, and archaeological sites tell us about our history and our heritage. Our country makes special efforts to protect and preserve the cultural resources listed in the National Register.

About the National Register

The National Register has three primary goals. It fosters cultural preservation at the national level. It promotes a greater appreciation for America's heritage. And it increases and broadens the public's understanding and appreciation of historic places. The National Register is a rich source of information for public education, interpretation, tourism, and research on places that document the contributions of all people.



Congress created the National Register as part of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966. The National Park Service, an agency of the US Department of the Interior, oversees the National Register. The law requires federal agencies to locate, inventory, nominate, and preserve cultural resources on federal lands. This includes the US Forest Service, which manages the Daniel Boone National Forest where Living Archaeology Weekend takes place each year.

The National Park Service automatically lists all federal historic areas and national historic landmarks in the National Register. Federal agencies and state and tribal historic preservation offices nominate other cultural resources for listing in the National Register.

Civic organizations and private citizens often start the nomination process, especially for cultural resources located on private property. Owners of private property listed in the National Register do not have to open them publicly, restore them, or even maintain them. However, National Register property owners can apply for federal funding and tax credits to do so.

To be considered for listing in the National Register, a cultural resource must be at least 50 years old. It must be significant to American history, architecture, engineering, culture, or archaeology. It must have integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. And finally, a cultural resource must meet at least one of these four criteria:

- Be associated with **events** that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of history
- Be associated with the lives of **persons** significant in our past
- Embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of **construction or architecture**
- Provide or have the potential to **provide information** important in history or prehistory

Over 1.6 million cultural resources throughout America are included in over 86,000 listings in the National Register. Kentucky has 42,000 cultural resources in about 3,400 listings. This is the fourth largest number among the 50 states! Many of the Kentucky listings are archaeological resources, like rock art sites, rockshelters, earthworks, historic house remains, cemeteries, and mining sites.

National Register Sites in and Around the Red River Gorge

There are hundreds of National Register properties on lands surrounding the Gladie Cultural-Environmental Learning Center, where Living Archaeology Weekend takes place.

The historic **Gladie Cabin** is a log structure now located near the Center. The Forest Service listed it in the National Register in 1989. The cabin was important in the settlement and industrial development of the Red River Gorge in the late 1800s-early 1900s.

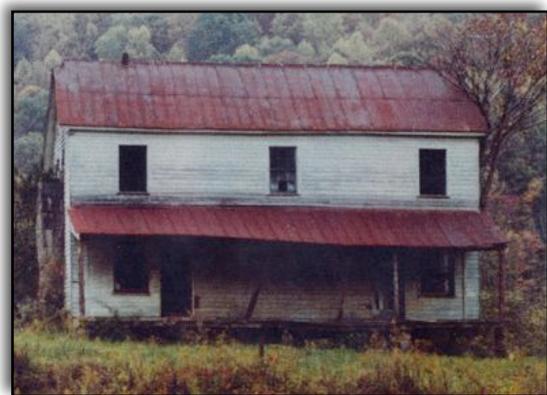


The restored Gladie Cabin in 1989

We do not know exactly where or when the Ledford family built Gladie Cabin, but it probably was in the Red River Gorge area during the 1870s. Sometime between 1875 and 1900, the family moved the cabin to its present location at the mouth of Gladie Creek. Besides the cabin, the Ledford farmstead at Gladie had two barns, a chicken house, a smokehouse, and a corncrib. The two barns still stand near the cabin.

In the late 1800s and into the 1900s, the small community at Gladie was the center of extensive timber logging activities in the Red River Gorge. In addition to scattered farmsteads with log houses and wooden outbuildings, the community had a small store, a one-room schoolhouse, and a cemetery. Gladie Cabin served as the community post office from 1884-1887 and again after 1900. According to oral history, the cabin also served as a boarding house for employees of the logging companies.

The original log home was one story and had one room measuring 16 x 22 feet. A sandstone fireplace and chimney stood at one end of the room. Over time, the Ledford family changed the cabin in several ways.



Rear addition and porch added to the original log cabin (undated photo prior to 1988 restoration)

Between 1910 and 1920, they used logs from another structure to build a second floor. Later the family built a two-story addition and porch with sawn lumber along the back of the log cabin. Their bigger house measured 32 x 28 feet. It had five rooms downstairs and three upstairs. Then the family covered the entire house with wood siding and roofed the house with tin. After 1937, a natural gas well provided heat and light. In the 1950s, they piped in running water from a nearby spring.

The Gladie community went into decline after the Great Depression and the end of the timber industry. The Ledford family lived in Gladie Cabin into the 1950s. After that time, many families lived in the house. By the 1970s, the chimney partly collapsed and the rundown structure was used to store hay.

In the 1980s, the U.S. Forest Service purchased the old Ledford farmstead and other properties in the former Gladie community. Restoration of Gladie Cabin began in 1988. Workers removed the wood siding, the dilapidated front and back porches, and the rear addition, exposing the two-story log structure. They replaced and repaired the chinking (the mortar in-filling the gaps between the large logs). Workers stabilized the sandstone foundation stones and repaired the chimney. They replaced the tin roof with white oak shingles similar to the ones that originally topped the cabin. Workers built new porches in the front and rear.

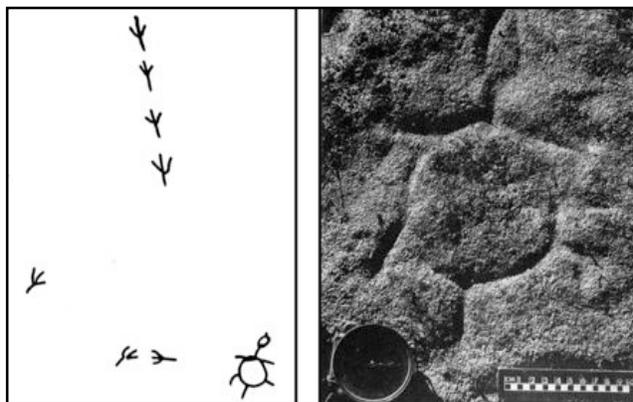
Today visitors are welcome to tour the restored Gladie Cabin and to learn about its restoration from displays in the Gladie Cultural-Environmental Learning Center.

Another local cultural resource listed in the National Register is rock art sites included in the **Prehistoric Rock Art Sites in Kentucky Multiple Property Submission**. A multiple property submission (MPS) is a group of listed cultural resources that have a common theme but are not located near one another. The Kentucky Rock Art MPS was listed in 1989 and expanded to include more sites in 1992. The sites are significant for their potential to provide information about prehistoric artistic expression, religious beliefs, and other lifeways in Kentucky.

There are 37 rock art sites in the Kentucky Rock Art MPS. The Daniel Boone National Forest contains 22 sites, many of which are located in and near the Red River Gorge. All of these rock art sites are petroglyphs – designs prehistoric people incised, engraved, abraded, or pecked into rock surfaces. Petroglyphs occur on boulders and rock outcrops in the open and, more frequently, in rockshelters. They date from 250 to 3,000 years old.

There are several types of motifs or designs at the rock art sites on the Daniel Boone National Forest. Animal tracks – especially bird but also bear and elk – are most common. Several sites have human designs, which include hands, feet, and entire human figures in abstract form. Geometric motifs include circles, zigzags, chevrons, parallel lines, and other shapes. One site in Lee County has an insect-like design.

Spratt's Petroglyph, one of two rock art sites listed in Menifee County, has curvilinear designs, bird tracks, and a possible animal paw print incised into a large boulder. Native people carved bird tracks, possible plant motifs, and other unidentified designs on two large boulders at the Skidmore Petroglyph site in Menifee County. Two rock art sites are near Nada Tunnel, which Living Archaeology Weekend visitors pass through in route to the event. One has incised V-shaped geometric designs and the other has three incised concentric circles.



Drawing and photograph of bird tracks and turtle motifs at Big Sinking Creek Turtle Rock Site in Lee County.

Many rock art sites in and around Red River Gorge are threatened by vandalism. People write their names and initials on top of the prehistoric petroglyphs. Some people even tried to quarry petroglyphs out of the rocks, completely destroying the designs.

Although Gladie Cabin and several nearby rock art sites were listed previously in the National Register, in 2003 they were included in a new National Register listing. The **Red River Gorge Geological Area, Clifty Wilderness, and Indian Creek Drainage Archaeological District** covers thousands of acres in parts of Menifee, Powell, and Wolfe counties. The cultural resources in the district contain the 12,000-year long record of use and habitation by many groups of people.

The Archaeological District includes 442 cultural resources. About three-quarters are prehistoric archaeological sites and one-quarter are historic archaeological sites. The district includes only four standing structures, like Gladie Cabin, because the federal government tore most of them down after they bought the land from private citizens.

The district contains six types of prehistoric archaeological sites. Rockshelters are the best known and perhaps its most important prehistoric cultural resource. Habitation sites are residential locations such as hunting camps, fishing camps, and villages. Lithic scatters are places on floodplains and ridge tops where native peoples processed nuts or resharpened stone tools. Lithic quarries and workshops are sites where they found chert and worked it into tools. Rock art sites include petroglyphs carved or engraved into rock surfaces. Burial sites are places where native peoples buried their dead.

There are nine types of historic archaeological sites and standing structures. One type is residences, farmsteads, and communities, such as Gladie. Logging-related sites include dams used to move logs on creeks, animal pens for livestock used in the logging industry, loggers' houses and communities, and railroads used to move timber. Iron ore mining pits relate to the iron industry. Camps, bridges, and culverts occupied or constructed by the 1930s Civilian Conservation Corps are another property type. Others historic site types are niter mines, moonshine still sites, pine tar kilns, tourism and recreation sites, and cemeteries.



Pine tar kilns etched into large boulder

Properties will be added to the Archaeological District as they are discovered and evaluated. More recent properties, such as early rock climbing routes, may be added after they reach at least 50 years in age. Such is the nature of the National Register.

To Find Out More

For more information about the National Register, contact the Kentucky Heritage Council (the Kentucky state historic preservation office) at www.heritage.ky.gov and 502-564-7005. Contact the federal office of the National Register of Historic Places in Washington, DC at www.cr.nps.gov/nr and 202-354-2211.

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