FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Contact: Andi Martin, Marketing and Public Relations Manager
andi.martin@ahc.alabama.gov, 334-230-2680

October 11, 2019

“Cooking with Commissary” Living History Series Continues at Confederate Memorial Park

(Montgomery, AL) The Alabama Historical Commission and Confederate Memorial Park are pleased to announce “Cooking with Commissary” as part of their 2019 Living History series. On Saturday, October 19, from 10:00 am – 4:00 pm, living historians will give demonstrations on food preparations during the Civil War.

Civil War food for both Union and Confederate soldiers was provided by their respective Commissary Departments. Leaders on both sides understood the importance of keeping soldiers well fed and worked tirelessly to keep up with the demand. When on the march or when camp equipment lagged behind, most meals came in the form of rations carried in soldiers’ haversacks. The lack of adequate food was a common problem for Confederate soldiers, caused mainly by an inadequate transportation system throughout the South.

Private David L. Mitchell, Co. A. 6th Alabama Cavalry wrote on April 13, 1864, “We are getting better rations now than we have ever got. We are now getting one pound & half of corn meal & one third of a pound pork per day and a little peas and rice twice a week...”

However, most soldiers’ meals did not come from their haversacks. According to Confederate Memorial Park Site Director, Calvin Chappelle, “Soldiers spent most of their time in stationary camps drilling, keeping monotony at bay, and eating whenever food was available. For breakfast, lunch, and dinner, soldiers looked to the company cooks who were tasked with turning army provisions into suitable meals.”

Union Captain S.S. Patterson, Chief Commissary of Subsistence for the District of Southwest Virginia, recalled in the fall of 1865 that “In a fixed camp or winter quarters it is a great advantage to have a regular cook and cookhouse – for each company. It saves times for the men and makes them devote more attention to cleanliness and drill. It saves rations, is far more healthful, comfortable, and (if properly conducted) satisfactory.”

“Cooking with Commissary” will be a great opportunity to gain more insight into the preparation and transportation of food during war times. Throughout the day, living historians will occupy the authentic reproduction barracks at Confederate Memorial Park discussing the roles of commissary and cooks. Demonstrations will begin at 10:00 am, 12:00 pm, and 2:00 pm next to the Commissary Building and Wagon. Visitors will also want to tour our state-of-the-art museum that displays a large collection of Civil War arms and artifacts. A new display case, installed earlier this year, focuses specifically on Alabama related weapons.
The event is free and open to the public. Normal museum admission rates apply. This is the final living history event on site for 2019. The next living history event will occur on April 24-25, 2020 with the annual Civil War Living History and Saturday Skirmish.

Confederate Memorial Park, a historic property of the Alabama Historical Commission, is located at 437 Co Rd 63, Marbury, AL 36051.

To learn more about Confederate Memorial Park, or the Alabama Historical Commission, please visit www.ahc.alabama.gov.

About the Alabama Historical Commission
Located in historic downtown Montgomery at 468 S. Perry Street, the Alabama Historical Commission is the state historic preservation agency for Alabama. The agency was created by an act of the state legislature in 1966 with a mission to protect, preserve and interpret Alabama’s historic places. AHC works to accomplish its mission through two fields of endeavor: Preservation and promotion of state-owned historic sites as public attractions; and, statewide programs to assist people, groups, towns, and cities with local preservation activities. For a complete list of programs and properties owned and operated by the AHC, hours of operation, and admission fees please visit ahc.alabama.gov.

####