

## WILLIAMSON A.M.

THURSDAY, MARCH 6, 2008



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Students from Oak View Elementary School in Franklin were among those to get the first glimpse of the statue of Roderick in Thompson's Station. A memorial unveiling and luncheon on Wednesday commemorate a Civil War hero, Roderick, the horse ridden by Gen. Nathan Bedford Forrest, during the Battle of Thompson's Station March 5, 1863.

## Horse tale helps recall Forrest's battle

### Statue a permanent reminder of Roderick's honor and valor

By JILL CECIL WIERSMA  
Staff Writer

**THOMPSON'S STATION** — Roderick gazes again across the countryside where he once rushed to be with his master on the battlefield.

Mayor Leon Heron unveiled a bronze statue of Gen. Nathan Bedford Forrest's loyal horse at Roderick Place Wednesday, honoring the 145th anniversary of the Battle of Thompson's Station. Attending were local officials,

Thompson's Station aldermen, county commissioners and Franklin Mayor John Schroer. Other invited guests took special note of the history they learned at the dedication from author and historian Eric Jacobson, of Historic Carton Plantation.

"We just finished our unit on the Civil War and I just thought it was a great opportunity for the kids to see some of our history right here," Oak



Kristy Nardoizzi with Chef's Market of Goodlettsville serves refreshments in period dress before a memorial unveiling and luncheon on Wednesday.

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# Horse: Statue helps visitors remember stories from area's past

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View Elementary Principal Denise Goodwin said of the 12 fifth-graders who attended with her. The students were randomly selected for the field trip by a drawing.

"They're going to grow up and remember what this is and know all about it," Goodwin said. She added that the children took pictures and shot video to create presentations they can soon share soon with other grades.

"I was amazed because I never get drawn for anything," Elizabeth Brackins said. "I want to know what kind of horse he was, where he died and that kind of thing."

Bradley Noelting likes to ride horses and said he was curious to learn more about Roderick.

"I know he was something great in the Civil war," he said. "I'd like to find out what the horse did that was so important."

Heron and Jacobson explained the history and some of the grand lore about Roderick.

"As a man not stirred by much, I think it says a great deal that Forrest knelt down, overcome with grief, to say goodbye to his beloved Roderick."

— Eric Jacobson, Carrington Plantation

On March 5, 1863, Forrest led his troops to cut off Union troops under the command of Gen. John Coburn coming down from Franklin. Roderick, wounded by three gunshot, was led away from the battle by Forrest's 17-year-old son, William. The horse bolted away to return to Forrest and was killed after being shot for a fourth time.

Jacobson described Roderick as a Chestnut gelding said to be Forrest's favorite horse.



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Millie Halvorson and her daughter Emily, 8, get an up-close view of the statue of Roderick.

Roderick was buried that night on the property now owned by Heron and his wife, Cynthia. Roderick Place is an 80-acre mixed-use development that will include dining, a day spa and pool, retreat, wellness center and an outpatient surgery center in addition to approximately 134 homes and a 60-room country inn. It will also include a retail village and an amphitheater.

Heron also announced the creation of the Roderick Award of Courage, which will be presented each March 5, starting next year, to an individual who, similar to Roderick, displays courage in the face of adversity. Jacobson thanked Heron for keeping history a vital part of the land's use. He noted it was a fitting memorial to the land's namesake. "I can say without absolutely any doubt that if there were more people like Leon Heron, much more of our American history would be preserved, not built upon. We may all live for our future, but all of us are products of our past."

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