

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.

1. Name of Property

Historic name: Arbuckle's Fort

Other names/site number: 46GB13, Keeney's Fort, [REDACTED] Fort

Name of related multiple property listing:

Frontier Forts of West Virginia

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

2. Location

Street & number: [REDACTED]

City or town: Alderson [REDACTED] State: WV County: Greenbrier

Not For Publication: x Vicinity: x

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this X nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property X meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

 national X statewide local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

 A B C X D

<hr/>	
Signature of certifying official/Title:	Date
<hr/>	
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government	
In my opinion, the property <u> </u> meets <u> </u> does not meet the National Register criteria.	
<hr/>	
Signature of commenting official:	Date
<hr/>	

Arbuckle's Fort _____

Greenbrier, WV _____

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- ___ entered in the National Register
- ___ determined eligible for the National Register
- ___ determined not eligible for the National Register
- ___ removed from the National Register
- ___ other (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- Private:
- Public – Local
- Public – State
- Public – Federal

Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

- Building(s)
- District
- Site
- Structure
- Object

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Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
_____	_____	buildings
<u>1</u>	_____	sites
_____	_____	structures
_____	<u>2</u>	objects
<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

- DEFENSE/Fortification
- DEFENSE/Military facility
- DEFENSE/battle site

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

- AGRICULTURE/agricultural field
- RECREATION AND CULTURE/outdoor recreation

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7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

N/A

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: N/A; Monument: Limestone, Sign: Wood, Paper

Narrative Description (Organized following Bulletin 36)

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

Summary Paragraph

Arbuckle's Fort is a 1.7 acre archeological site of a frontier fort, located at [REDACTED] Alderson, Greenbrier County, which also includes two objects, a stone monument and a wooden interpretive panel. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Its location was passed down through oral history and the location was marked by a stone monument in the 1910s or 1920s. Archeological investigations from 1990 to 2016 show that the archeological deposits consist of eighteenth-century artifacts in the plow zone, and in cultural features that extend into the underlying subsoil. A crucial component of the site is the stockade trench that delineates a classic two bastion wooden stockade. Other archeological features include the remains of a foundation and a stone chimney base from a blockhouse, an adjacent below ground powder magazine, larger refuse and storage pits, small pits and postmolds, and cooking and blacksmithing areas inside the stockade. Archeology has also demonstrated that the site contains a rich assemblage of artifacts exclusively from the 1770s and 1780s that can inform about material culture of the time, and activities and foodways for those living in the fort. Examples of the artifacts include arms artifacts such as gun flints, gun parts, and lead balls, domestic artifacts such as ceramics and bottle glass, activities artifacts such as a frog gig, a toy whizzer, and a chisel, personal artifacts such as metal buttons and buckles, and an amulet with an X suggesting the presence of an African American, and a small glass disk from a letter seal that imprinted the word "Liberty" in wax. The site does not have any disturbances other than plowing. The lack of pre- or post-fort historic artifacts and features contributes to its high archeological integrity. Although Native American lithics, primarily debitage, is also present in this plow zone, these earlier Native American artifacts are easily distinguishable from the eighteenth-century artifacts and do not dilute the archeological clarity of the site.

Narrative Description

Environment

[REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] The location was likely chosen for military reasons, including a defensible location ([REDACTED]), access to water ([REDACTED]), accessibility to a well-used trail along [REDACTED], and central location within the [REDACTED] community of settlers.

Time Period of Occupation

Documents suggest that the fort was erected in the spring of 1774 for frontier defense during Lord Dunmore's War. We do not know exactly when it was abandoned and dismantled, but the defensive need would have waned soon after the end of the American Revolution, and through the 1780s. The 1794 Battle of Fallen Timbers would have marked a definitive end period (see Context statement). The historic artifacts match well with these dates.

Persons, Ethnic Groups, or Archeological Cultures

Archival research demonstrates that Arbuckle's Fort was built by Botetourt County militia in the spring of 1774 under Captain Matthew Arbuckle on land owned by settler John Keeny. The fort was manned by militia under Capt. Matthew Arbuckle during Lord Dunmore's War (1774) and under Capt. William Hamilton during the American Revolutionary War (1775-1783). Arbuckle's Fort would have also been occupied by settlers (men, women and children) from the Muddy Creek area during times of danger. Artifacts suggest the presence of at least one African American, almost certainly an enslaved person. Tax records suggest that fort builder Matthew Arbuckle owned two enslaved people.

There were two attacks by Native Americans on Arbuckle's Fort recorded in the historic Draper Manuscripts (McBride and McBride 2014). The first was in late July or early August 1774, when a fort sentry from Arbuckle's Fort was fired upon by Native Americans, and a nearby resident, William Kelly, was killed at his house. Then, on September 11, 1777, the fort was possibly fired upon but with no casualties.

Physical Characteristics

The Arbuckle's Fort site is an open field with a stone monument (Photos 103, Figures 2, 5, non-contributing as outside the period of significance) erected in the 1910s or 1920s. The bronze plaque on the monument is entitled Muddy Creek Massacre (a 1763 Pontiac's War, pre-fort event) but the last sentence of the text reads "Here stood Arbuckle's Fort in 1774." The site also includes a non-contributing wooden interpretive sign installed in 2024 (Photo 1-3). The initial archeological investigations were conducted in 1990 and consisted of metal detecting and excavation of screened shovel test pits, as part of a larger frontier forts survey project funded by a West Virginia Department of Culture and History grant to the Summers County Historic Landmarks Commission (McBride and McBride 1991, McBride et al. 2003). This survey documented historic artifacts from the mid to late eighteenth century. The shovel test pits revealed a soil profile consisting of a 9- to 11-inch-deep medium brown silt loam plow zone, followed by a yellowish tan clay subsoil. One shovel test pit west of the stone monument showed evidence of a cultural feature extending into the lighter clay subsoil.

The next field season, in 1992, included excavation of test units, one of which revealed a dark linear stain visible in the tan clay subsoil, not far from the stone monument. This stain, which was about

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1.5 to 2 feet wide and 1.5 feet deep below the plow zone (so would have been more like 2.5 feet deep from the top of the original ground surface), was very significant, as it resulted from the trench the militia had dug to hold the vertical stockade logs. In 1997, with the help of a backhoe, we followed the linear stain from the stockade trench and delineated the entire stockade trench which delineated a diamond shaped fort, with two bastions and connecting "curtain" walls from 100 to 120 feet long, enclosing about a half an acre. The north-south dimension of the stockade is about 235 feet, and the east-west dimension is 160 feet. This outline is shown in an aerial photograph in Figure 4 and on the Site Map. This stockade trench delineated the outer wall of the fort, and most subsequent investigations were conducted inside this area. Metal detecting conducted outside of the stockade showed that fort period artifacts dropped off rapidly after about 20 to 30 feet from the stockade.

One main feature of Arbuckle's Fort stockade is the presence of bastions at the north (Figure 6) and south ends (see site map). The orientation of these bastions with the cardinal directions suggests that surveying instruments were used in laying out the fort. Each bastion would have allowed militia stationed there to see along or "cover" two walls, so all four walls of the fort were protected. Postmold stains in each bastion (see site map) suggest there were wooden platforms to provide a better view of the surrounding terrain. The stockade included a small gate, such as to admit a single person, not far from the southern bastion, and a slightly larger gate (perhaps to allow entry of a small wagon) to the west of the northern bastion (shown on the site map and Figure 7).

An internal stockade first identified on the east side of the chimney extended also to the west of the chimney, and included a small jutting-out area called a "redan" before it hit the main outer stockade on the fort's west side (site map, Figure 8). This redan would have functioned much like a bastion to provide better coverage of the internal stockade wall. Individual postmolds of varying sizes were visible in this stockade trench (Figure 9). A second, but shorter stockade trench was also discovered to the west of the chimney/blockhouse.

This internal stockade poses the questions of whether it may have been the first stockade fence built, preceding the fully enclosed diamond shaped outer stockade and southern bastion, or if it was a "secondary" line of defense contemporaneous with the main stockade. The distribution of the lead balls are shown on the site map. The distribution of spent or fired round-ball ammunition found at Arbuckle's Fort, interpreted as coming from Indian attackers, indicates firing on both the northwestern and northeastern main walls of the fort, but also firing on the two shorter stockade walls and the blockhouse. Though it is possible for the blockhouse to have been fired upon over the main stockade, it would have been nearly impossible to hit the short walls if the main stockade was present unless it had been breached. That seems very unlikely given the descriptions of this attack as unsuccessful. A better explanation for this pattern is that the short walls were part of an earlier fort and that these fired balls probably represent the 1774 attack which occurred from the southeast and northwest, whereas the balls at the outer stockade walls represent the 1777 attack which came mostly from the north and came after the fort had been expanded from its 1774 footprint. Further evidence for this conclusion is found in the placement of dropped, unfired, round balls, shot. In this instance, the dropped balls (.40-.50 in) and shot (.28-.32 in) suggest militia firing positions at the blockhouse, along the northwestern short stockade, and along the main northwestern and northeastern stockade walls. The lack of dropped balls in the two bastions is surprising but may be explained by very limited excavation in these areas.

The 1992 and later unit excavations around the stone monument revealed that the stone monument sat in the center of a chimney base structure defined by sandstone foundation remnants (site

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map, Figure 10), which was surrounded by a dry laid stone building foundation (site map, Figure 11). The chimney base is 12 feet long on its outer edge, with side arms of 5-foot depth, and an internal fire box area 7 feet long. The surrounding foundation is 22 x 14 feet. This kind of arrangement fits very well with what would be expected from a blockhouse, where an overhanging second story would have precluded an end chimney. Besides serving as a lookout and position from which to fire on an enemy, the blockhouse likely served as a place to store weapons and supplies and would have provided sleeping shelter too. Excavation in the area where an initial shovel test pit had documented a cultural feature west of the blockhouse revealed a large cellar pit, encircled by postmolds (site map, Figure 12). This feature, which is about 8 feet x 6 feet and extending about 2 feet below the surface, is very likely a powder magazine. The area of the blockhouse and powder magazine has the greatest artifact density of anywhere on the site and has darker and more organic soil in this area, which can be characterized as a dispersed midden deposit.

Two very interesting specialized "activity areas" include a likely food preparation area in the northeast area of the fort, and a blacksmithing area in the northwestern area of the fort (see site map). The cooking area was first noticed when metal detecting revealed many fragments from cast iron kettles here. Later excavation in this area revealed two large pits (from 2 to 3 feet to over 8 feet circular) filled with refuse, primarily animal bone that would have been left over from food preparation (site map and Figure 13). These pits could have initially served as a rectangular cellar for storage under a small structure, and a circular pit, then later filled with refuse when no longer needed for storage. This area is shown with the cooking fire in Figure 14, a drawing based on archeological evidence.

Artifacts from Arbuckle's Fort all date to the eighteenth century; a sample is shown in Figures 15-23. The most common artifact found by metal detecting and in the unit excavation is a hand wrought nail (Figure 15). These nails would have been used to aid in construction of the stockade and especially the bastion gun platforms, and blockhouse and any other structures. Some nails may have been made on site. Daub, lightly fired clay used for chinking, was the next most common architectural artifact. Another common artifact picked up by metal detecting, in addition to the wrought nails, was slag. A dense concentration of slag or metal residue in the northwestern portion of the site provides evidence of a blacksmithing area (see site map and Figure 14). No evidence of a forge has been found but unit excavation in this area is very limited. In this area, several informative artifacts have been found, including a broken knife blade in a pit, and two small disks of metal, about the size of a modern dime and eight sided. One of the disks has an X scratched into it (Figure 21). Artifacts with Xs carved into them have been found on many slave house sites, where they are usually interpreted as a sort of amulet or good luck token, common within the West African BaKongo religious tradition. The knife found within the pit with the other disk in this same area is also very interesting, as knives were often seen as infused with power within the West African worldview. African Americans are not well-represented in the documentary record of frontier forts, so these artifacts are especially helpful to expand our thinking about their role in guarding the frontier. We know from tax records that fort builder Matthew Arbuckle owned two enslaved persons.

The ceramics all date from the eighteenth century, and include white salt glazed stoneware, scratch blue stoneware, British Brown stoneware, creamware, Chinese export porcelain, redware, and delft, but in small quantities and mostly extremely small fragments. Container glass is primarily very small fragments of olive-green glass, likely from wine or other alcohol bottles. The low frequency of items like ceramics or bottle glass, which are concentrated around the blockhouse, underscores that the inhabitants were not able to bring much with them when they came to the fort.

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In contrast to the ceramics and container glass, animal bone leftover from cooking is pretty common at the site, especially in the refuse pit features in the cooking area (site map, Figures 14 and 17). Analysis of this bone shows that meat played a large role in the diet of the fort inhabitants. These bones were mostly from medium to large domestic animals such as pigs and cows, but also bones from many animals which would have been hunted, such as deer, rabbit, squirrel, woodchuck, black bear, raccoon, and skunk. By looking at the different anatomical parts represented, zoo-archeological specialist Dr. Terry Martin concluded that the cattle and pigs were probably butchered at the fort, but the deer were "field-dressed," with only the most usable portions brought back to the fort for cooking. Ethnobotanical remains are also preserved at this site, providing more information on diet and foodways. Ethnobotanist Dr. Jack Rossen studied samples of rich "midden" or garbage-rich soil samples collected from Arbuckle's Fort and found mostly corn, fruits, berries and nuts. Wheat and barley seeds were also present but not as numerous as they typically are on later domestic sites. The artifacts include a barbed iron artifact that was likely for frog gigging. Artifacts that likely functioned as tools also include fragments of metal chisels for woodworking.

The artifacts recovered from Arbuckle's Fort also inform us about the defense of the fort, as indicated above in the discussion about the distribution of the lead balls in relation to the internal stockade lines. Defensive related items include arms and ammunition, such as a fragment of a rifle site, lead balls of various caliber (Figure 19), and gunflints, specially shaped pieces of flint used to create the spark and set off the powder charge in a flintlock rifle. The balls are unusably .45 to .50 caliber and are likely associated with rifled muskets, the typical hunting weapons of the time. Lead shot of .30-.32 cal. were also found; these could come from pistols or a buckshot charge fired from a musket. It is interesting how many of the gunflints found at Arbuckle's Fort are very small and worn out. Some of these are shown in Figure 18, all made of the honey-colored variety of flint, from France or Italy. Darker gray English or Dutch-made gun spall flints were also found, as were gunflints made out of local chert. This use of local chert, which generally were not quite as high quality as the European types, and the small and "used up" nature of these gunflints are likely related to the shortages experienced on the frontier. One gunflint, shown in the upper left in Figure 18, is so worn that the striking edge extended on to its lead patch or grip which had been applied to the flint.

Personal artifacts include fragments of kaolin smoking pipes, metal buttons from clothing, and buckle fragments (Figure 20) that likely would have been on shoes and at the knee of britches. A lead whizzer, a disk with holes drilled for insertion of a string on which it would have been suspended and turned to make a whizzing sound, was also found. One of the more interesting personal artifacts found at Arbuckle's Fort is a small (about a half inch in length) glass document seal found in the plow zone (Figure 22) that probably would have been set in a ring or cufflink, or something that could be worn on a chain or strap around the neck. This seal imprints the word "Liberty," in wax, shown in Figure 23. This artifact reminds us that this frontier defensive system was not just geared toward the conflict with local Indians but took place within the larger setting of the American Revolution. Matthew Arbuckle, founder of this fort, expressed this sentiment in a 1776 letter to Col. William Fleming, as follows,

"Sir, My country Shall Never have to Say I Dare not Stand the Attacks of the Indians or fly the Cause they are So Justly fighting for, on the Contrary I will Loose the Last Drop of My Blood in Defense of My Country when fighting for that Blessed Enjoyment Call(d) Liberty...." (see McBride and McBride 2014).

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Likely Appearance of the Property During Its Period of Occupation or Use

Historically, the setting was probably much the same as it is today, except that all trees along [REDACTED] might have been cut to both build the fort and clear a viewshed (field of fire) for the militiamen. The site may have been wooded before the fort's construction, as many areas of the Greenbrier Valley were savannah and not heavily wooded at the time of Euro-American settlement.

Current and Past Impacts

The only impact to the site is that it has been plowed but given the short occupation span and single component nature of the historic occupation, plowing does not constitute a major problem. The site has been a hay field recently, a function which likely will continue for the foreseeable future, and which poses no impact to the archeological resources. The site is interpreted by a wooden sign installed in 2024. Visitation is expected to be low density and without impacts to archaeological resources.

Integrity

Arbuckle's Fort has high archeological integrity as a frontier fort. It has extremely high integrity of setting and association and feeling, with the defining features [REDACTED] highly visible today. Since the militia likely would have cleared many trees to provide good lines of sight, the open pasture/hay field in which the fort is located conveys what the site would have looked like in the 1770s and 1780s.

Arbuckle's Fort has fort artifacts in the plow zone and in the archeological features below the plow zone ; these convey its defensive/military function, including the main stockade trench with two bastions and post-molds, and two gates indicated by a break in the stockade trench, two smaller internal stockade trenches (one with a bastion/redan) with postmolds, a stone foundation for a blockhouse, an intact stone chimney foundation in the center of the blockhouse, and an underground cellar near the blockhouse that almost certainly functioned as a powder magazine cellar with postmolds around it suggesting the presence of a structure over the cellar. These features allow us to understand the size, design, and construction methods of this fort. Arbuckle's Fort has other architectural and refuse features including other building cellars, two blacksmithing pits, and refuse filled pits, as shown on the site map. These features provide information on activities at the fort such as crafts, housing, site maintenance, and storage as well as producing many artifacts.

Arbuckle's Fort had a very short late eighteenth century occupation, with no later contamination, and so has tremendous archeological clarity. The presence of Native American lithics present do not diminish the integrity of the site since these are easily separated from the fort period occupation. Arbuckle's Fort has a large assemblage of late eighteenth-century artifacts that can be used to address significant research questions such as consumer goods availability, types of arms and ammunition used (gun parts, spent and dropped lead balls, gunflints), diet (animal bone and seeds from plants), activities (chisels, smoking pipes, a frog gig), clothing and social/economic display and diversity (clothing buckles and fancy ceramics such as white salt glazed stoneware), ethnic diversity (amulet with X indicating African American presence), political identification (a glass seal with "Liberty" impressed). Not just the presence of these artifacts but their spatial patterning and integrity facilitates their application to research questions. For example, above we discussed distribution of the spent and dropped lead balls adjacent to the internal line of stockade outer stockade walls, and how these suggest

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the internal stockade was part of the outer wall of the fort when it was attacked in 1774, and with lead balls along the southern wall demonstrating its presence when the fort was attacked in 1777 (see site map). The distribution of cast iron cooking fragments and animal bone and seeds provide information on cooking areas, and concentrations of slag provide information on a blacksmithing area. The African American amulet and a second small disk (similar but without the X) were both found in the blacksmithing area, suggesting that the African American occupant was likely involved in blacksmithing. All these data were used as the basis for the reconstruction shown as Figure 14.

Previous Investigations

All archeological investigations have been directed by Dr. W. Stephen McBride and Dr. Kim A. McBride, with support from the University of Kentucky, and the Kentucky Archeological Survey. The initial survey (metal detecting and shovel test excavation) in 1990 was part of a grant from the West Virginia Department of Culture and History (McBride and McBride 1991) to the Summers County Historic Landmarks Commission, and continued with excavation of test units in 1992, funded by a West Virginia Humanities Council grant to the Summers County Historic Landmarks Commission. In 1997 a backhoe was used to uncover and map the stockade trench. Continued metal detecting, shovel test and unit excavation was conducted intermittently for multiple short seasons (sometimes as short as one weekend) in 1998, 1999, 2000, 2002, 2003, 2006, 2009, 2011, 2015 and 2016, with funding from Fairs and Festivals Historic Preservation funds, and assistance from Concord University students. Limited geophysical survey was conducted in the area identified as the blacksmithing area, where ground truthing of a GPR anomaly resulted in the location of a small pit. Publications stemming from this work are listed in Section 8. Field records are maintained by Greenbrier Valley Archaeology, but copies will be curated with the artifacts in the future. Some artifacts are curated by the Greenbrier Historical Society, 814 Washington Street W, Lewisburg, WV, and some are on loan to the WV Division of Culture and History for exhibit at the Grave Creek Archaeological Complex's Delf Norona Museum.

Contributing and Non-Contributing Resources

The site is composed of one contributing resource, the archaeological site (46Gb13) and two non-contributing objects, a stone monument erected in the 1910s or 1920s, and a wooden frame interpretive sign installed in 2024 by the West Virginia Land Trust.

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8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A. Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B. Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C. Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D. Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

- A. Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
- B. Removed from its original location
- C. A birthplace or grave
- D. A cemetery
- E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- F. A commemorative property
- G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Archeology/Historic-Non-Aboriginal
Exploration/Settlement
Military

Period of Significance

1774-1783

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Significant Dates

1774
1777

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Cultural Affiliation

Euro-American
African American

Architect/Builder

Capt. Matthew Arbuckle and his militia company

Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

This statement is abbreviated, as suggested by the instructions in National Register Bulletin 16A, Page 66 for individual properties registered under a Multiple Property Documentation Form. Arbuckle's Fort is a highly significant archeological site, significant at the state level, under Criterion D, from 1774 to 1783 under the Multiple Property Documentation *Frontier Forts of West Virginia*. Arbuckle's Fort was an important regional fort established by Captain Matthew Arbuckle and militia under his command in the Spring of 1774 as part of Lord Dunmore's War, with continued use through the American Revolution.

It contains archeological features and artifacts that provide information on the property type Frontier Forts of West Virginia. Additional information is available in the Multiple Property Documentation Form, *Frontier Forts of West Virginia*.

Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least one paragraph for each area of significance.)

History of Arbuckle's Fort

Arbuckle's Fort, also known as Keeny's or [redacted] Fort, was constructed on John Keeny's property [redacted] in present Greenbrier County, West Virginia in April 1774 by Captain Matthew Arbuckle's Militia Company. The level of militia occupation during Dunmore's War and the Revolutionary War suggests that this fort was the most important fort in the Muddy Creek neighborhood. Period letters and Revolutionary War pension applications suggest that the fort was garrisoned from Spring to early Fall between 1774 and 1782 by at least part of the Muddy Creek Militia Company. Initially, Captain Matthew Arbuckle served as militia commander, with that role later passing to Captain William Hamilton during the American Revolution. The fort occasionally housed militiamen from more distant places such as the Shenandoah Valley, and local settlers.

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Two attacks on Arbuckle's Fort are recorded, in 1774 and 1777. Writing on August 1, 1774, Major James Robertson, provided some insight into the first action,

“this minet I got flying news of the Indians shooting at one of Arbuckle's Centery's on [REDACTED]. They say Likewise that they attacked one Kelly's yesterday about half a mile from that Fort where they Tomhak'd Kelly and Cut him Vastly, but the men from the fort heard the Noise and Ran to their Assistance and drove the Indians off before they Either kill'd or sculp'ed Kelly” (Thwaites and Kellogg 1905:103-104).

In his pension application, James Kelly confirmed that his father William Kelly died of wounds received in the 1774 raid, and noted that “his father before that sent his family (Declarant among the rest) to Arbuckle's Fort” (Kelly 1833-35). This suggests that there had been a warning before this raid. Leah Viney recorded that her family was in Arbuckle's Fort during the 1774 attack and that “she remembered seeing the burial near the fort of a man [Kelly or sentry?] who had been killed by Indians lurking about the fort” (Rogers n.d.). Finally, Jacob Stevens stated “Before we came [in 1775] John Keeney's fort, on the [REDACTED] was attacked by Indians (Stevens n.d.).

The second assault on the fort came on September 11, 1777 when, according to Captain John Stuart, “a number of guns were heard by sundry persons in our neighborhood supposed to be at [REDACTED] fort about sundown last night” (Thwaites and Kellogg 1912:81). In the same letter, John Stuart asked “Capt. Hendry Smith to send a Serg.'s command at least to assist the people [REDACTED] who is very few in numbers, and I am afraid will be much distress.” This is all that is recorded about this attack, but earlier that same day (Sept. 11, 1777) a band of Mingo and/or Shawnee attacked the farm of James Graham, [REDACTED] in present Summers County, West Virginia. It is likely that this was the same party that later attacked Arbuckle's Fort. The abandonment of Arbuckle's Fort likely occurred soon after the end of the American Revolution, as the Native American attacks in the area greatly decreased.

Arbuckle's Fort is extremely significant under Criterion D under the areas of Exploration/Settlement, Military and Archaeology/Historic-Non-Aboriginal. In regard to Exploration/Settlement area of significance, Arbuckle's Fort was a key node or entrepot in the settlement system, serving as a central place in the period before towns were established. Arbuckle's Fort was one of the larger forts that settlers would go to in times of danger, being preferred over smaller neighborhood forts that were considered less defensible and less comfortable. It was essential in preserving the Euro-American settlements of the area and ensuring that settlers did not flee back to better defended areas to the east in the 1770s and 1780s, as they had in the 1750s and 1760s.

Arbuckle's Fort is significant under the area Military. Arbuckle's Fort was the main militia-built fort for the Muddy Creek neighborhood, and built by a prominent military leader, Captain Mathew Arbuckle, who played a prominent role in the 1774 Battle of Point Pleasant and stated his dedication in the Revolutionary Cause (see quote in Section 7). Arbuckle's Fort is one of the forts most frequently cited in the Revolutionary War pension applications of militiamen from the lower Greenbrier Valley. It is well documented in terms of its construction in the spring of 1774 (see narrative description) and with unsuccessful attacks by Native Americans in 1774 and 1777. Its two-bastion design is a very classic design for frontier forts. Its location at the confluence of Mill and Muddy Creeks, the latter a long-established transportation route for Native Americans, was chosen by Mathew Arbuckle, and informs us of what he thought was a most strategic location.

Arbuckle's Fort

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Arbuckle's Fort is significant under Archaeology/Historic-Non-Aboriginal because the site contains structural features and artifacts that provide data useful in the study of the frontier defensive system, the design and construction methods of frontier forts, the material culture of the militia and settlers, provisioning of food within the fort, and political ideology. More detail on the nature of the deposits is provided in Section 7. Despite plowing, the Arbuckle's Fort artifacts have a horizontal integrity that allows them to be used to identify activity areas within the fort and make hypothesis about past activities/ actions. An example is the distribution of lead balls at Arbuckle's Fort, discussed in Section 7 in relation to 1774 and 1777 attacks and the hypothesized variance in the structure of the fort at the time of each attack. Additionally, the strong archival documentation about Arbuckle's Fort adds to the research and interpretive potential of its below ground resources.

Arbuckle's Fort

Greenbrier, WV

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

For more bibliographical resources, see the MPD *Frontier Forts of West Virginia*.

Kelly, James

1833-35 Revolutionary War Pension Application, S1544. National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, D.C.

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McBride, Kim A. and W. Stephen McBride

2014 *Frontier Defense: Colonizing Contested Areas in the Greenbrier Valley of West Virginia*. Booklet for wide public distribution, supported by a grant from the West Virginia Humanities Council to Summers County Historic Landmarks Commission.

McBride, W. Stephen, Kim A. McBride, and Greg Adamson

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McBride, W. Stephen, and Kim A. McBride

1998 Archeological Investigations of Arbuckle's Fort. *Journal of the Greenbrier Historical Society* 6 (6):15-45. Lewisburg, West Virginia.

McBride, W. Stephen, Kim A. McBride and J. David McBride

1996 *Frontier Defense or the Greenbrier and Middle New River Country*. Program for Cultural Resource Assessment Report 375, University of Kentucky, Lexington.

McBride, W. Stephen, and Kim A. McBride

1993 *Forting-Up on the Greenbrier: Archeological Investigations of Arbuckle's Fort, 46GB13, Greenbrier County, West Virginia*. Program for Cultural Resource Assessment Report No. 312, University of Kentucky, Lexington.

McBride, W. Stephen, and Kim A. McBride

1991 *An Archeological Survey of Frontier Forts in the Greenbrier and Middle New River Valleys of West Virginia*. Program for Cultural Resource Assessment Archeological Report No. 252, University of Kentucky, Lexington.

Stevens, Jacob

n.d. Interview by the Rev. Dabney Shane. Draper Manuscripts, 12CC:133-138. The State Historical Society of Wisconsin, Madison.

Arbuckle's Fort

Greenbrier, WV

Thwaites, Reuben G. and Louise P. Kellogg

1905 *Documentary History of Dunmore's War, 1774*. Draper Series, Vol. 1. The State Historical Society, Madison.

1912 *Frontier Defense on the Upper Ohio, 1777-1781*. Draper Series, Vol. 3. The State Historical Society, Madison.

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository: field records at Greenbrier Valley Archaeology, Inc., artifacts at Greenbrier Historical Society, Lewisburg, WV, some on loan to WV Division of Culture and History, on exhibit at Grave Creek Archaeological Complex

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): Archaeological site 46Gb13

Arbuckle's Fort _____

Greenbrier, WV _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 1.7 acres

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

UTM References

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

NAD 1927 or NAD 1983

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

There are no natural features to easily define its boundary, which is shown as the outer rectangle on the site map, so the boundary is defined by the extent of the fort related archeological deposits, as determined by archeological fieldwork. This boundary encloses the exposed stockade trench, which delineates the outer wall of the fort, plus an approximately 35-to-40-foot buffer on all sides, based on the demonstrated drop off of fort period artifacts at this distance from the stockade trench during metal detecting.

11. Form Prepared By

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organization: Greenbrier Valley Archaeology, Inc.
street & number: 1362 Washington Street
city or town: Lewisburg state: WV zip code: 24901
e-mail: kim.mcbride@uky.edu
telephone: (859) 421 5943
date: April 29, 2024

Arbuckle's Fort

Greenbrier, WV

Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

Photo Log

Name of Property: Arbuckle's Fort

City or Vicinity: Alderson

County: Greenbrier State: West Virginia

Photographer: W. Stephen McBride

Date Photographed: April 25, 2024

Photo 1 of 3: WV_Greenbrier_Arbuckle's Fort_Photo 001, site setting, looking northeast

Photo 2 of 3: WV_Greenbrier_Arbuckle's Fort_Photo 002, site setting looking southwest

Photo 3 of 3: WV_Greenbrier_Arbuckle's Fort_Photo 003, site setting, looking southeast

Arbuckle's Fort

Greenbrier, WV

Figure Log

All figures by W. Stephen McBride or Kim A. McBride

- WV_Greenbrier_Arbuckle's Fort_Figure 001, stockade excavation, looking west-southwest, 1997;
WV_Greenbrier_Arbuckle's Fort_Figure 002, monument and excavators, looking south, 2003;
WV_Greenbrier_Arbuckle's Fort_Figure 003, excavation in progress, looking northeast, 2014;
WV_Greenbrier_Arbuckle's Fort_Figure 004, aerial photo showing setting and stockade, looking west, 1997;
WV_Greenbrier_Arbuckle's Fort_Figure 005, monument plaque, looking east, 2010;
WV_Greenbrier_Arbuckle's Fort_Figure 006, stockade and north bastion, looking south, 1997;
WV_Greenbrier_Arbuckle's Fort_Figure 007, gap in stockade showing gate, looking southeast, 1997;
WV_Greenbrier_Arbuckle's Fort_Figure 008, internal stockade in units, looking west-northwest, 1999;
WV_Greenbrier_Arbuckle's Fort_Figure 009, post mold cross section, looking south, 1997;
WV_Greenbrier_Arbuckle's Fort_Figure 010, blockhouse chimney, looking west, 1992;
WV_Greenbrier_Arbuckle's Fort_Figure 011, foundation of blockhouse, looking north-northeast, 1992;
WV_Greenbrier_Arbuckle's Fort_Figure 012, cellar-powder magazine with posts, looking north, 1992;
WV_Greenbrier_Arbuckle's Fort_Figure 013, refuse pit feature, looking northwest, 2002;
WV_Greenbrier_Arbuckle's Fort_Figure 014, Arbuckle Fort drawing by W. Stephen McBride, based on archaeology, 2022;
WV_Greenbrier_Arbuckle's Fort_Figure 015, wrought nails, 2006;
WV_Greenbrier_Arbuckle's Fort_Figure 016, cast iron kettles, 2006;
WV_Greenbrier_Arbuckle's Fort_Figure 017, faunal remains *in situ*, looking west, 2006;
WV_Greenbrier_Arbuckle's Fort_Figure 018, gunflints, 2006;
WV_Greenbrier_Arbuckle's Fort_Figure 019, musket balls *in situ*, looking north, 2016;
WV_Greenbrier_Arbuckle's Fort_Figure 020, buckles, 2006;
WV_Greenbrier_Arbuckle's Fort_Figure 021, amulet with x, 2010;
WV_Greenbrier_Arbuckle's Fort_Figure 022, glass liberty seal, 2012;
WV_Greenbrier_Arbuckle's Fort_Figure 023, glass liberty seal printed in wax, 2012.

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for nominations to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.). We may not conduct or sponsor and you are not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number.

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for each response using this form is estimated to be between the Tier 1 and Tier 4 levels with the estimate of the time for each tier as follows:

- Tier 1 – 60-100 hours
- Tier 2 – 120 hours
- Tier 3 – 230 hours
- Tier 4 – 280 hours

The above estimates include time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and preparing and transmitting nominations. Send comments regarding these estimates or any other aspect of the requirement(s) to the Service Information Collection Clearance Officer, National Park Service, 1201 Oakridge Drive Fort Collins, CO 80525

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Arbuckle's Fort
Name of Property
Greenbrier, West Virginia
County and State
Frontier Forts of West Virginia
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)



WV_Greenbrier_Arbuckle's Fort _Figure 004, aerial photo showing stockade, looking west, 1997



WV_Greenbrier_Arbuckle's Fort _Figure 005, monument plaque, looking east, 2010



WV_Greenbrier_Arbuckle's Fort _Figure 006, stockade and north bastion, looking south, 1997

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WV_Greenbrier_Arbuckle's Fort _Figure 007, gap in stockade showing gate, looking southeast, 1997



WV_Greenbrier_Arbuckle's Fort _Figure 008, internal stockade in units, looking west-northwest, 1999



WV_Greenbrier_Arbuckle's Fort _Figure 009, post mold cross section, looking south, 1997

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Arbuckle's Fort

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WV_Greenbrier_Arbuckle's Fort _Figure 010, blockhouse chimney, looking west, 1992



WV_Greenbrier_Arbuckle's Fort _Figure 011, foundation of blockhouse looking north-northeast, 1992



WV_Greenbrier_Arbuckle's Fort _Figure 012, cellar-powder magazine with posts, looking north, 1992

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Arbuckle's Fort

Name of Property

Greenbrier, West Virginia

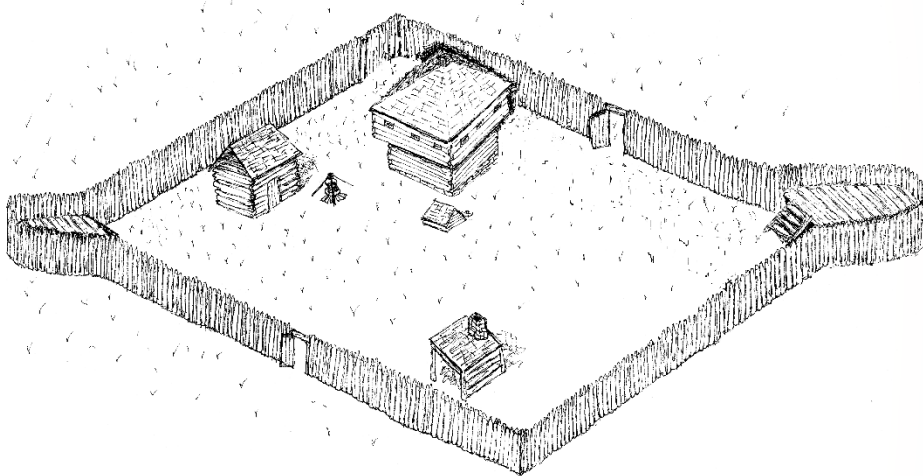
County and State

Frontier Forts of West Virginia

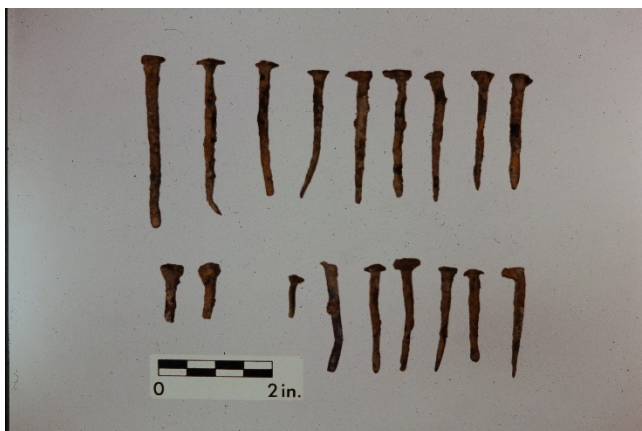
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)



WV_Greenbrier_Arbuckle's Fort _Figure 013, refuse pit feature, looking northwest, 2002



WV_Greenbrier_Arbuckle's Fort _Figure 014, Arbuckle Fort drawing by W. Stephen McBride, based on archaeology, 2022



WV_Greenbrier_Arbuckle's Fort _Figure 015, wrought nails, 2006

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Arbuckle's Fort

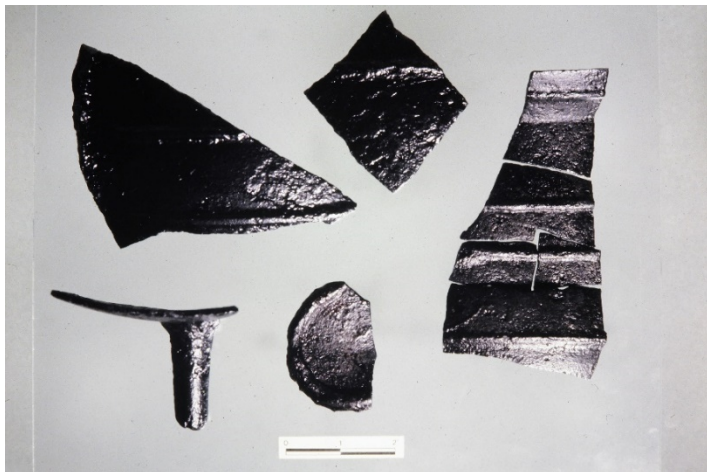
Name of Property

Greenbrier, West Virginia

County and State

Frontier Forts of West Virginia

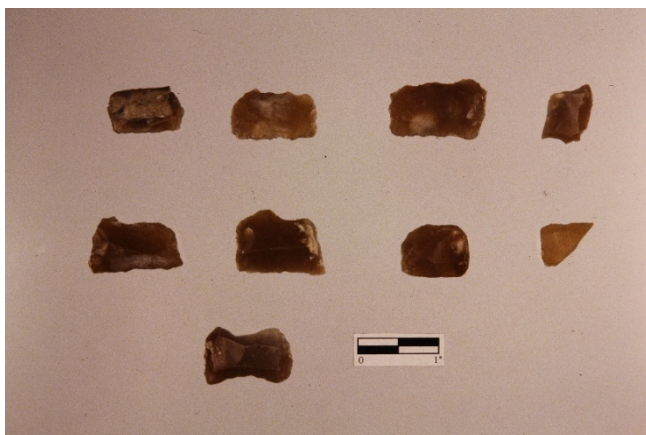
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)



WV_Greenbrier_Arbuckle's Fort _Figure 016, cast iron kettles, 2006



WV_Greenbrier_Arbuckle's Fort _Figure 017, faunal remains *in situ*, looking west, 2006



WV_Greenbrier_Arbuckle's Fort _Figure 018, gunflints, 2006

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National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Arbuckle's Fort

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Frontier Forts of West Virginia

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WV_Greenbrier_Arbuckle's Fort _Figure 019, musket balls *in situ*, looking north, 2016



WV_Greenbrier_Arbuckle's Fort _Figure 020, buckles, 2006



WV_Greenbrier_Arbuckle's Fort _Figure 021, Amulet with X, 2010

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Arbuckle's Fort

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WV_Greenbrier_Arbuckle's Fort _Figure 022, glass liberty seal, 2012



WV_Greenbrier_Arbuckle's Fort _Figure 023, glass liberty seal printed in wax, 2012