

Travel



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This is year for big doin's in 3 Southern states

IF YOU LIKE celebrations, you ought to start thinking about visiting Texas, Tennessee or Arkansas this year.

Arkansas and Texas are celebrating 150th anniversaries, and Tennessee is celebrating Homecoming '88. All three are sending out the message to expatriates and visitors: Y'all come back now!

It is only a few years since we celebrated our bicentennial as a nation. Now the states, one by one, are celebrating their own anniversaries. Michigan's turn won't come until next year, but many Michigan residents are really down-home with a thin layer of Yankee veneer.

ARKANSAS, once called the Bear State, is already flying its red-white-and-blue starred flag over a series of sesquicentennial events in the capitol city of Little Rock and in towns from the Mississippi River to the borders of Oklahoma and Texas.

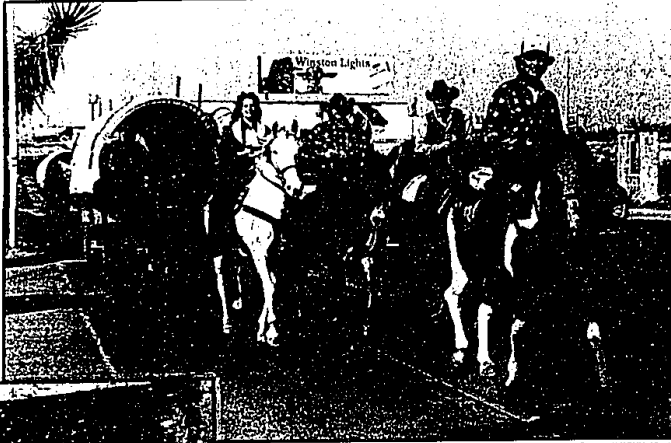


Iris Jones
contributing travel writer

festivals that celebrate the diverse ethnic character of the pioneers.

A highlight will be the Arkansas Sesquicentennial Play, which tours the state from March 3 through May 30, capturing the issues that faced the state's settlers as they marched toward statehood in 1836.

The world premiere of George



Photo/MICKY JONES



Phillip Koonce's Symphony No. One will be performed in Fayetteville in April. Koonce is a native Arkansan, and the performance will include state soloists and choirs.

The focal point of the year will

be June 13-15 when simultaneous commemorative observances will be held statewide to honor the 150th birthday.

TEXAS IS holding the Birthday Party of the Century in the capitol city of Austin Feb. 20 through March 2, launched from the steps of the state capitol building by Prince Charles.

That's just the beginning of things in the big Lone Star State.

It's going to be almost a year-long celebration for Texas and Arkansas this year. Music, parades, shows, parties and special events of all kinds will play a strong part. At the top left is a typical event for Arkansas' Ozark Folk Center — a guitar pickin' contest. The wagon train will be a familiar sight in Texas as scenes of the Old West are re-created. Wandering musical groups such as this one in San Antonio (left) will add color and atmosphere to Texas cities during the celebrations.

Austin has planned more than 100 historical, musical and entertainment events for that city alone. Every city and town has been planning parades, printing song books, sponsoring contests and planning festivities.

Hikers, canoers, boaters and bicycle riders are only a few of the enthusiasts taking part in The Great Texas Crossing, with the longest expedition following the 1,100-mile route of the Trans Texas Trail.

HOUSTON HAS built a new museum of Texas History and Technology to trace the 465-year heritage of Texas by using a "time machine" that makes three-dimensional displays come to life.

If you remember from your school days that Texas became a state in 1845, you may wonder what happened to their mathematics. Texas won independence from Mexico in 1836 and was a Republic until 1845 when it became a state.

For more information, contact

Texas is holding the Birthday Party of the Century in the capitol city of Austin Feb. 20 through March 2, launched from the steps of the state capitol building by Prince Charles.

the Texas Sesquicentennial Commission, Box 1886, Austin, Texas, 78767.

TENNESSEE became a state in 1796, so its a long way past its 150th birthday. It will celebrate its bicentennial in ten years. In the meantime, Tennessee is calling its celebration Homecoming '88. Communities all over the state are planning festivals, some of them with original fund raising ideas.

In Soddy-Daisy, residents were flying high on plane rides sponsored by the area council; they could see their home town from a new point of view for only five cents for each pound of body weight. In Afton, each person in town is being asked to contribute a penny for every year of their age.

There will be 2000 fairs statewide this year in the Volunteer State, so named for its record in furnishing volunteers for the War of 1812 and the Mexican War. Expect everything from art shows, beauty pageants and chattering suppers to Senior Citizen days and lecture series.

Contact Tennessee Homecoming '88, 18th Floor, James K. Polk Building, Nashville, Tennessee, 37219.

Guidebooks can help make travel easier

By Iris Jones
special writer

Travelers can make it easier for themselves if they read about travel before making decisions. Here are some guidebooks which could prove to be useful:

"Passport: to Europe's Small Hotels and Inns" by Beverly Beyer. It lists 850 lodgings in 23 countries and has tips on car rental rates, Eurail passes and other travel bargains. This is a handy purse or pocket-sized book. Available by writing: Passport Publications, Box 24684B, Los Angeles, CA 90024. Include a check for \$5.95 for a single copy and \$1.50 for postage and handling.

"Lost and Found in Australia" by John McDermott. It describes, among other things, the availability of desert safaris by bus and whitewater safaris by "rubber ducky" or houseboating, wine-tasting, kangaroo "bangtail" watching and festivals.

With color pictures, maps and

good humor the author lets you plan a different trip. Timely because the America's Cup sailing races are coming to Perth in 1987.

Before you go to the Old West, see Alice Cromie's book "Tour Guide to the Old West," published by Times Books. Each of the Western States is covered by chapters that include information on historical sites, old forts, battlegrounds and hints of legends surrounding characters of the early days. Available in local bookstores or from Times Books, Three Park Ave., N.Y., N.Y. 10016.

A different kind of western experience is offered in the "Movie Lover's Guide to Hollywood," by Richard Allenman, one of the travel editors at Vogue Magazine.

This book gives a "gossipy insider's" look at more than 300 surviving Los Angeles sites that have played a role in the movie capitol's history — the secret location of "Dynasty's" Carrington mansion and Ronald Reagan's first rooms in Hollywood, for example.

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