



Arkansas House Newsletter

April 14, 2015

House Celebrates Ratification of 13th Amendment

On April 14th our state celebrated the 150th anniversary of the day Arkansas voted to ratify the 13th amendment to the Constitution to abolish slavery.

On that day in 1865, the Arkansas General Assembly convened for a special session in the Old State House. The Arkansas Civil War Sesquicentennial Commission asked churches, public buildings, educational institutions, and individuals around the state to ring bells 13 times at 1 p.m. to celebrate this historic anniversary. The Commission held a bell-ringing event at that time on the steps of the State Capitol in Little Rock.

Arkansas was the 21st state to ratify the amendment and the second state in the Confederacy.

Governor Isaac Murphy called for the Special Session. The House Journal recorded the words of his brief speech as follows,

“The ratification of this amendment will result in the restoration of peace and harmony among the states. Those whose names are connected with its adoption will obtain a high place in the history of political and moral progression. This is the great act that will consolidate the union of the States on the basis of equality, politically and socially, remove the cause of our troubles and bind together all the States in a Union of interest and affection not hereafter to be broken. Its prompt ratification is most earnestly recommended.”

Here is video from the ceremony on the Capitol steps.