



National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior

Andersonville National Historic Site

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## Andersonville National Historic Site Traveling Exhibit Project Update



### Background

An average of 140,000 visitors travel each year to Southwest Georgia to tour the National Prisoner of War Museum at Andersonville National Historic Site. The Museum opened in 1998 to fulfill the purpose of the 1970 legislation that established Andersonville as a unit of the National Park System: to enhance public understanding of the sacrifices made by American prisoners of war (POW) throughout our nation's history. Though Andersonville's story began with the Civil War military prison and associated National Cemetery, the historic site now interprets the POW experience from all American military conflicts, including the Revolutionary War to the present day.

Inspired by an idea by Vietnam Veteran Robert Blackwell, the National Park Service (NPS) conceived of and initiated a traveling exhibit, in cooperation with the American Ex-Prisoners of War (AXPOW) and the Friends of Andersonville (FOA), to give more citizens the opportunity to appreciate the American POW story. This project will carry the American POW story – including audio-visual interviews and original artifacts – across the nation.

### Exhibit Overview

The 1,200 square foot traveling exhibit will be based on the thematic organization of the National POW Museum – Capture, Prison Life, Those Who Wait, and Freedom. Hosting facilities will need to meet NPS standards for temperature and humidity control and security to ensure the preservation of artifacts. Receiving institutions will set-up, promote and market the exhibit, arrange for a former POW to attend the exhibit opening, host the exhibit for a three to six month period, use NPS-provided educational materials, record the number of visitors, then pack up and bear shipping costs to the next venue. The goal is to reach at least another 50,000 visitors per year with the POW story with this traveling exhibition.

To see a project description and design documents posted on-line, visit: <http://go.nps.gov/victoryfromwithin>

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## Planning and Development

The planning phase for this major traveling exhibition, entitled *"Victory From Within: the American Prisoner of War Experience,"* funded by the NPS and FOA, was completed in 2009. The design phase, also funded by NPS and FOA, was completed in 2010. Subsequent to the planning and design phases, a fund-raising campaign by FOA and the AXPOW raised enough matching monies to secure an NPS Park Partnership Project for the fabrication phase. In addition to FOA and AXPOW, donors included the Military Ex-Prisoners of War Foundation, the Korean War Ex-POW Association, local service organizations and chambers of commerce, individual former prisoners of war, family members in memory of deceased POWs, and others. In April, 2011, a fabrication contract was awarded to a professional exhibit fabrication firm, Exhibitology. The project is expected to be completed and ready to tour the country in the fall of 2013.

As of the summer of 2013, the exhibit is in the fabrication phase, in which construction of the exhibit panels and display mounts will occur. The multimedia component of the exhibit is in final development. A separately-funded Friends of Andersonville project to develop an educational curriculum to accompany the exhibit has been completed.

For further questions on the project, or to schedule a date to host the traveling exhibit, please contact Eric Leonard, Chief of Interpretation and Education, Andersonville National Historic Site, at: [Eric\\_Leonard@nps.gov](mailto:Eric_Leonard@nps.gov)

## How Can You Help?

Though the major fund-raising campaign to plan, design, and fabricate the exhibit has been completed, additional funds could be used to sustain and support the exhibit as it travels the country. Tax-deductible donations to provide ongoing support to the exhibit as it tours the country should be made out to "POW Traveling Legacy" and mailed to the Friends of Andersonville, P.O. Box 186, Andersonville, GA 31711. The Friends of Andersonville are a 501[c][3] organization. Learn more at [www.friendsofandersonville.org](http://www.friendsofandersonville.org)

The park welcomes suggestions for venues, and as we begin the process of scheduling the exhibit we also will seek volunteers for exhibit openings.



Sample of the audiovisual interactive program screens.



Mock-up of "tower" exhibit kiosk.



"Tower" exhibit kiosk under construction.

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