



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Independence National
Historical Park

143 S. Third Street
Philadelphia, PA 19106

Public Affairs Office

215-597-0060 phone
215-597-0042 fax

Independence National Historical Park

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For Immediate Release

For more information contact:

Jane Cowley, 215-597-0060

Edgar Allan Poe, the Many Sides of Genius

In honor of the 200th anniversary of the birth of Edgar Allan Poe, the National Park Service is creating new and exciting exhibits at the Edgar Allan Poe National Historical Site.

The Edgar Allan Poe National Historical Site will be closed to the public from December 1, 2008 through January 17, 2009, for the installation of new exhibits celebrating the incredible life and literary legacy of the great American poet and author, Edgar Allan Poe.

Join us on January 17, 2009 (as we re-open the Poe House and unveil the new exhibits) and throughout 2009 for a series of events celebrating this literary genius. A few of these events are listed here. For more details, visit our website, www.nps.gov/edal.

◆ **Saturday November 22, 2:00 PM**

Former Edgar Allan Poe National Historic Site volunteer, now Park Ranger at Longfellow Historic Site, Rob Vellela, will talk about Poe's "Longfellow War" and sign and discuss his Poe biographical 2009 calendar.

◆ **Saturday January 10 (Time to be announced)**

On January 10, 2009 the Free Library of Philadelphia (<http://www.library.phila.gov/>), Central Branch, will feature internationally renowned Poe actor David Keltz as Poe. Also appearing at the library that day will be Park Ranger Helen McKenna-Uff as Poe's fiancée Helen Whitman.

◆ **Friday evening, January 16, 6:00 to 8:00 PM**

The Official Friends of Poe bicentennial birthday party! Festivities will take place at the German Society, 7th and Spring Garden Streets, across the street from Poe. Actors and Park Rangers Paul Campbell and Helen McKenna-Uff will perform an original piece, "Doppelganger Poes". There will be a wine-tasting of vintages mentioned in Poe's works and a preview of the new exhibits.

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◆ **Saturday, January 17, 2:00 PM**

Official public opening for new Edgar Allan Poe National Historic Site exhibits, Daniel Hoffman, poet and Poe scholar, will offer a talk on Poe's influence on women writers like Joyce Carol Oates.

◆ **Saturday, March 28, 2:00 PM**

19th century literature expert, David Reynolds, author of *Beneath the American Renaissance*, biographies *Walt Whitman's America* and *George Lippard, Prophet of Protest* and professor at the Graduate Center of the City University of New York, will discuss "Poe in his Times" and sign copies of his new book *Waking Giant: America in the Age of Jackson*.

◆ **Friday April 3, 2:00 PM**

Cultural historian, Karen Halttunen, author of *Confidence Men and Painted Women*, and a professor at UCLA, will discuss her book *Murder Most Foul*, a fascinating investigation into how Poe's Gothic horror was shaped by shifts in philosophy and reading tastes.

◆ **Saturday, May 23, 2:00 PM**

Tony McGowan, a West Point English professor, will speak on Poe's military experience, which included a stint at West Point, and how it influenced Poe's writing.

◆ **October (exact date to be announced)**

Kevin Poe, Park Ranger from Bryce Canyon (no relation) will give a fascinating and entertaining illustrated talk which reveals the science behind Poe's major work, *Eureka*, a largely unknown and misunderstood work that explains the origins of the universe.

◆ **Speakers and events confirmed to participate, dates to be announced:**

Hal Poe, professor and descendant of one of Edgar's relatives, will discuss the most famous member of his family tree.

Edgar the Raven will fascinate children and adults during a demonstration by the Audubon Society of Sharon Connecticut. Park Rangers will discuss Poe's poem about the bird.

The Edgar Allan Poe National Historic Site is located at 7th & Spring Garden Streets, just a few blocks north of Center City Philadelphia. The site is open Wednesday to Sunday from 9 AM – 5 PM, closed Monday and Tuesday. On street parking is usually available, or take SEPTA bus routes #43 or 47. For more information, call 215-597-8780.

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