

## Flight93 tributes moved to storage

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National Park Service employees and Flight 93 ambassadors removed tributes from the wire fence and slate angels honoring each of the passengers and crew at the Flight 93 temporary memorial on Tuesday.

Memorial Superintendent Joanne Hanley said the tributes are being moved nearby to the former Vish house, now owned by the park service, so they won't be damaged during the relocation of the temporary memorial. The memorial is being moved across Skyline Road to property owned by the Families of Flight 93.

"Our main concern is to treat everything with respect and dignity," she said. "The tributes were left here in trust by the American people for the National Park

Service to take care of in perpetuity. It is a tremendous responsibility."

Hanley said the temporary memorial is being moved because the Svonavecs, property owners, sent a notice to the agency last September that gave a 365-day notice of the termination of the license agreement for the land's use.

In an interview published on July 15, Patrick Svonavec, attorney for the family, said the termination notice was issued to prevent the park service from asserting that they are not permitted to request public help with the expenses for providing security under the guise of the park service's exclusive right under the written agreement.

"The National Park Service cannot operate a public memorial on private land, nor can it expend public funds without a written agreement or license," Hanley said. "Nor can we abandon government property on private land. The government doesn't do business on a handshake with items entrusted to us. The tributes were left here by the American people, knowing they will be part of the memorial collection."

About 30,000 items have been left at the site over the years, she said. National Park Service curator Barbara Black and her staff remove tributes on a regular basis and put them into storage.

Almost everything that was erected or placed at the temporary memorial was done so with the idea that it would have to be moved when the permanent memorial is built, she said. Even the ambassadors shelter was moved. A stainless steel pole and the fence posts were cemented in, and won't be moved. The fence itself will be moved. The property will be left in the same condition in which it was found.

The site preparation work began on July 7. Park service staff from the Flight 93 office and the Fort Necessity, Friendship Hill, Allegheny Portage Railroad and Johnstown Flood sites are assisting with the move. Clear View Monuments, Shanksville, is moving the heavier items. The goal is to have the move completed by mid-August.

After nearly seven years since the crash of United Flight 93, the messages and items left at the temporary memorial are still as strong emotionally as immediately after the crash, Black said. Items

were carefully cataloged so they can be returned to the same spot at the new temporary memorial.

Mary Alice Mankamyer, a site ambassador, was helping to move the tributes.

"I have mixed emotions," she said. "I have to wonder what is the story behind each item left here, and why it was left here. It's difficult to move them."

Debbie Borza, a member of the Families of Flight 93, said the park service held a conference call for the families to talk about the move before it happened.

"I'm really proud of the Families of Flight 93, being able to purchase the property so the temporary memorial can be moved," she said. "I'm very proud and so glad the National Park Service is there to do that move for us. Everything about Flight 93 is inside of them — they are honoring the heroes of Flight 93 and being inspired by them and moved by them as they are moving the mementos."

People from all around the world come to the temporary memorial, she said.

"They find themselves wanting, needing and desiring to leave something," Borza said. "When I visit and I look at the things they've left, I know that person that I've never met. I know there is a relationship with the heroes, a connection that temporary memorial creates between the people who visit and the heroes on the plane. As a family member, I'm touched and I'm honored by what they leave."

Hanley said she couldn't stress enough how sacred the National Park Service staff feels their duty was, is and will be as caretakers of the temporary and permanent memorials.

"The National Park Service and the Families of Flight 93 stand shoulder to shoulder in their commitment to the American people," she said. "We will provide the same level of dignity, solemnity and honor at the new temporary memorial and at the permanent memorial."

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