



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Fredericksburg and Spotsylvania
National Military Park
120 Chatham Lane
Fredericksburg, Virginia, 22405

National Park Service News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – August 19, 2016
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National Park Service Centennial: A Speaker's Series A Joint Program of the National Park Service and the Central Rappahannock Regional Library

This September, the National Park Service and the Central Rappahannock Regional Library will host a speaker's series focusing on various topics related to the history of the National Park Service, which turns 100 years old August 25.

Each of the programs will explore a different aspect of the National Park Service and some of the sites under its stewardship. Discussions will include how parks are created, an examination of early battlefield preservation and the establishment of our first military parks, the development of our own park in Fredericksburg, and finally a consideration of how parks in the southern United States handled racial segregation in the mid-20th century.

All programs begin at 7:00 p.m. and will be held at the Headquarters Branch of the Central Rappahannock Regional Library at 1201 Caroline Street. The schedule, topics, and presenters are:

September 8 – Kirsten Talken-Spaulding, "*The Making of a Park.*"

Superintendent Kirsten Talken-Spaulding will discuss how a national park is created. Who decides what's significant and what gets to be a national park? What is involved in adding a unit to the National Park Service? As the first superintendent of Fort Monroe National Monument, Talken-Spaulding will explain how this incredible site became a park.

September 15 – Dr. Timothy B. Smith, "*The Golden Age of Battlefield Preservation.*"

Dr. Timothy B. Smith's talk is based upon his book by the same title *The Golden Age of Battlefield Preservation: The Decade of the 1890s and the Establishment of America's First Five Military Parks*. Dr. Smith will first put the Golden Age into the larger context of Civil War battlefield preservation by discussing the various generations of preservation from the war until now. He will also look at the 1890s itself and examine why exactly it was so golden before launching into a discussion of the lasting importance of the Golden Age and its influence on later preservation even to today, especially incorporating its influence on our own park here at Fredericksburg and Spotsylvania.

September 22 – Dr. Joan Zenzen, “Interpretation: From the CCC to Pokemon Go.”

Dr. Joan Zenzen will describe interpretation at the Fredericksburg & Spotsylvania National Military Park over time. She will discuss the 1930s Civilian Conservation Corps' transformation of the park, Mission 66 additions of the 1950s and 1960s, and more recent challenges resulting from traffic congestion and developments. She will conclude with the effects of Pokemon Go on visitor experience and park management.

September 29 – Dr. Erin Krutko Devlin, “Segregation in the Southern National Parks.”

Dr. Erin Krutko Devlin’s “Segregation in the Southern Parks” will explore her research on the evolution of NPS policy in relation to civil rights, and illuminate the experience of African American park employees and visitors in the state of Virginia from the 1930s through the 1960s. In the mid-20th century, southern national parks were segregated. Restrooms, picnic areas, lodges, lunch counters, and cabins were designated “For White Only” or “For Negro Only.”

All programs are free.

Kirsten Talken-Spauling is currently serving as the 15th superintendent of Fredericksburg & Spotsylvania NMP having just served as the first superintendent of Fort Monroe National Monument, declared by President Obama in his first use of the 1906 Antiquities Act on November 1, 2011. Talken-Spauling began her career in public service with the Virginia State Park system and has over twenty years of experience in the National Park Service including leadership positions in parks across the country and the national office. After graduating with a BS from the College of William and Mary, she completed her Master’s degree (MDiv), and served in the U.S. Navy reserves.

Dr. Timothy B. Smith is an author/historian and a professor of history at the University of Tennessee-Martin. He has authored numerous books to include *Shiloh: Conquer or Perish; This Great Battlefield of Shiloh: History, Memory, and the Establishment of a Civil War National Military Park; and Champion Hill: Decisive Battle for Vicksburg*. His examination of the entire 150-year history of battlefield preservation will be out next year.

Dr. Joan Zenzen is an independent historian who has written extensively about the National Park Service, including official histories of five national parks. Her *Battling for Manassas: The Fifty-Year Preservation Struggle at Manassas National Battlefield Park* was published by Penn State University Press in 1997, while *Fort Stanwix National Monument: Reconstructing the Past and Partnering for the Future* was released by State University Press of New York in 2009. Dr. Zenzen completed a history of the Fredericksburg and Spotsylvania National Military Park in 2011, which will be the basis of her talk.

Dr. Erin Krutko Devlin is an Assistant Professor of History and American Studies at the University of Mary Washington. She is the author of a National Park Service cultural resource study focused on segregation at Lewis Mountain in Shenandoah National Park. Her forthcoming book, *Remember Little Rock*, examines the public memory of the 1957 school desegregation crisis and its relationship to ongoing debates about race, education, and public policy.



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