



Community Bulletin



Ranger Tyler Gum gives a tour on the "Burning of the Arsenal."

Civil War 150th a Success Despite Inclement Weather

By Graham Humphrey, Ed. Intern

On April 16th-17th Harpers Ferry NHP welcomed visitors to the park's Civil War Sesquicentennial kick-off event, "War Comes to Harpers Ferry: Burning of the Arsenal." Although stormy weather dampened visitation on Saturday, gorgeous skies on Sunday brought out over one thousand visitors. The park offered ranger-guided programs, staffed living history exhibits, an arsenal and armory archaeology exhibition, author talks and book signings, and a full range of family and youth activities. These hands-on activities were very popular with the many families visiting the park. Highlights included gun puzzles, a telegraph station, a scavenger hunt, viewing of the newly created and released 1861 Vodcast (video podcasts) and a refugee wagon activity. Youth participating in at least three of the activities received a special Jr. Ranger patch.

In the Industry Museum, the Hands-on Gun Puzzle, showed how technology was forever changed with the invention of interchangeable parts. Children raced against each other to see who could put the pieces together in the fastest time, and in doing so, learned how interchangeable parts played a role in the speed of production.

Down the street families listened as a telegraph operator sent messages across the wires and then learned how to send their own message.

Visitors also had the opportunity to participate in the Under Fire Scavenger Hunt and also watch students from Harpers Ferry Middle School's vodcasts, tell the stories of 1861 from their own point of view.

In the Refugee Wagon activity families took on the roles of families living in

town during the war and were given only a short time to make the difficult decisions about which items they would take with them as they fled Harpers Ferry. This station was also an opportunity to talk about 19th century artifacts such as a butter churn, dumb bells and a wash basin while also relating the experience to contemporary refugee issues.

Visitors of all ages had a wonderful time participating in these educational activities while at the same time learning how the coming of war affected Harpers Ferry and its citizens.

Join us at the next Civil War Sesquicentennial event "In the Shadows of John Brown: The 1861 Battle of Bolivar Heights" on October 15-16, 2011. The 1861 battle will be commemorated with living history, ranger conducted programs, family & youth activities and book signings.



Telegraph Station



Refugee Wagon



Gun Demonstration

April Volunteer of the Month

Harpers Ferry National Historical Park would like to celebrate the contributions of Education Intern, Colleen Keegan. Originally from New Hampshire, Colleen is a recent graduate of Wells College in Aurora, New York, where she majored in history and minored in secondary education. In the summer of 2009, Colleen began her volunteer work at the park as an intern with Visitor Services. She has been working with the education branch since Summer 2010 taking on a number of projects: assisting with school reservations, developing marketing tools, and most significantly, she has been able to complete a lot of sewing projects that include assisting with student vodcast costuming, making program materials, and repairing period clothing. Colleen recently decided to spend another summer with the education branch expanding her knowledge of the National Park System.

In her free time, Colleen enjoys sewing swimming, water-skiing, canoeing and snowmobiling.



We are very grateful to Colleen for offering her talents to the education branch and Harpers Ferry National Historical Park!

If you are interested in volunteer opportunities at Harpers Ferry, please log on to www.nps.gov/hafe or call (304)535-5017.

Upcoming Events

May 7 - "Batteaux on the Rivers: Highways of Trade 1812"

Time: 11:00 AM – 4:00 PM

Location: Shenandoah River & Harper House

Virginia Canals and Navigation Society & Park Living History rangers. Wager Family Flour Business used boats to ship flour to Georgetown and Alexandria.

May 21 – "The Ingenuity of John Hall: 200th Anniversary of Hall's Breechloader Patent"

Time: 10:00 AM – 4:00 PM

Location: Lower Town

Special exhibit and ranger conducted programs throughout the day.

May 28-29 - "Defend and Protect: Arming America's Soldiers"

Time: 11:00 AM - 4:00 PM

Location: Lower Town

Special exhibits featuring the guns of the Harpers Ferry Armory that defended a young republic. Special tours and demonstrations at 2, 3, 4 p.m.

Quartermaster Ledger Sheds Light

A ledger used by U.S. Quartermaster Capt. George A. Flagg during the Civil War recently caused a buzz in the museum office. Flagg was in charge of providing quarters, storage and transportation for the army along with providing certain supplies such as clothing.

Recently, the ledger was exhibited and studied. Melinda Day and Phil Officer found it to be a valuable statistical record of African Americans in Harpers Ferry during the Civil War. The ledger describes all "Persons and Articles employed and hired" at Harpers Ferry from 1862-1865. Of particular interest is the column titled "By Whom Owned?" The term "Contraband" or another person's name in this column indicates that the person employed was African American.

During the war, many enslaved African Americans fled to Union-occupied

towns like Harpers Ferry to seek amnesty from their owners. Harpers Ferry also contained contraband camps during the War due to its Union occupation within a slave-holding territory. Captain Flagg, in fact, was authorized to employ contraband slaves to help with work such as building defenses, driving supply trains, cooking and washing. It is in part due to the large number of contraband that came to Harpers Ferry that Storer College was started in 1867.

Captain Flagg's ledger is being transcribed and will eventually be available in the park digital archives.

For additional information about the park and park activities log on to www.nps.gov/hafe



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

The history of Harpers Ferry has few parallels in the American drama. It is more than one event, one date, or one individual. It is multi-layered, involving a diverse number of people and events, decisions and actions that influenced the course of our nation's history. Visit Harpers Ferry and step into history.

Harpers Ferry National Historical Park
P.O. Box 65
Harpers Ferry, West Virginia 25425

Visitor Center
304-535-6029

Harpers Ferry Historical Association Bookshop
304-525-6881

Harpers Ferry NHP Home Page
www.nps.gov/hafe/

The National Park Service cares for the special places saved by the American people so that all may experience our heritage.