Harpers Ferry

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Harpers Ferry National Historical Park

Harpers Ferry and the Civil War Sesquicentennial

What was the first target in Virginia following secession? Where was the largest capture of of Union troops during the Civil War? The answer to both is **Harpers Ferry**! Strategically located on the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad at the northern end of the Shenandoah Valley, Union and Confederate troops moved through Harpers Ferry frequently. The town changed hands eight times between 1861 and 1865. Four years of warfare resulted in a garrison town under martial law, military hospitals, partisan warfare, and a base of operations for military campaigns. The park's battlefields include fortifications, trench lines and ruins and were described by one soldier *as carved out by nature for some great tragedy.*

Starting in 2011 Harpers Ferry National Historical Park will host a number of sesquicentennial events and exhibits commemorating its rich Civil War history.

Schedule of Events
2011 - 2015

Title of Event: War Comes to Harpers Ferry: The Burning of the Federal Arsenal
Date: April 16-17, 2011
Description: This two-day event will focus on the April 1861 secession of Virginia from the Union and the subsequent burning of the Federal Arsenal at Harpers Ferry. Activities will include, living history, ranger conducted programs and family/youth activities.

Title of Event: In the Shadows of John Brown: The 1861 Battle of Bolivar Heights
Date: October 15-16, 2011
Description: Two years to the day after John Brown's Raid, Union and Confederate troops clashed on Bolivar Heights. The event will highlight the unique parallels between John Brown and participants of the battle. Activities will include, living history, ranger conducted programs and family/youth activities.

Title of Event: Stonewall Stopped: Jackson's 1862 Valley Campaign
Date: May 26-27, 2012
Description: This event will focus on General Rufus B. Saxton's successful defense of Harpers Ferry during Stonewall Jackson's Valley Campaign in the spring of 1862. Activities will include, living history, ranger conducted programs and family/youth activities.

Title of Event: Prelude to Freedom: The 1862 Battle of Harpers Ferry
Date: September 13 -16, 2012
Description: This event will chronicle the three day Battle of Harpers Ferry in September of 1862 that resulted in the largest surrender of US troops during the American Civil War. Activities will include, living history, ranger conducted programs and family/youth activities.

Exhibit: Forever Free: The Emancipation Proclamation
Date: February 3, 2013 through end of year
Description: This year long exhibit will highlight the refocused war effort and the Union commitment to ending slavery.

Title of Event: Harpers Ferry, the Gettysburg Campaign & the Birth of West Virginia
Date: June - July 2013
Description: Weekend events through June and July will highlight Harpers Ferry's role in the Gettysburg Campaign and commemorate the birth of West Virginia in June of 1863. Activities will include, living history, ranger conducted programs and family/youth activities.

Title of Event: Washington Saved! Jubal Early's 1864 March on Washington
Date: July 4-6, 2014
Description: This event will focus on Harpers Ferry's roll in delaying Jubal Early's 1864 march on Washington. Activities will include, living history, ranger conducted programs and family/youth activities.

Title of Event: Thunder in the Valley: Sheridan's 1864 Valley Campaign
Date: Multiple events August – October, 2014
Description: This event will focus on Harpers Ferry's role as a staging ground and supply base during Philip Sheridan's 1864 Shenandoah Valley Campaign. Activities will include, living history, ranger conducted programs and family/youth activities.

Exhibit: The Freedman's Bureau, Educating the Newly Freed Slaves and the Prelude to Storer College
Date: February 1, 2015 through end of year
Description: This exhibit will launch a full year of activities that will highlight Harpers Ferry's role in the education of newly freed slaves post Civil War. Activities will include living history, ranger conducted programs and family/youth activities.

For updates to the schedule of events and park activities go to **www.nps.gov/hafe**

For books, art, maps, posters, music CDs, historic photos, DVDs, games, puzzles, notecards, and postcards visit the Harpers Ferry Historical Association website at **http://harpersferryhistory.org**