

## **Annual Narrative – 2005**

Each year at Independence National Historical Park (the park) follows a familiar rhythm. The winter months bring the beauty and the headaches of snow and ice plus a chance to linger and spend more time with each visitor. Spring brings gardening, grass mowing, school groups, and utility concerns. Soon it's time to think about July 4<sup>th</sup> and pausing to remember the stirring events that happened here, while still mowing the lawns, handling thousands of visitors and managing major special events. Late summer into fall brings more school groups, end of the year spending, budget priorities, and more utility projects.

Each year follows a rhythm; and yet, every year creates its own memories and its own pictures that resonate through time. Each employee carries a unique personal perspective and collection of images, which may well include the marvelous tableau opening of the Second Bank Portrait Gallery, the energy of the Equality Forum, the fun and pageantry of the Four Days of the Fourth, or one of thousands of quiet, profound moments as this place and its staff impact the lives and the experiences of millions of visitors.

The following summary captures in brief a year in the life of “the best park in history.”

### Management Excellence

The superintendents, managers, and supervisors at the park strive to protect our world-class resources and provide for our equally world-class visitors while using the best practices in management.

This fiscal year began with the implementation of a major park reorganization. Under the leadership of then Superintendent Mary Bomar, the park began implementing both its strategic plan and its business plan. The central mission and workload of the park underwent evaluation both internally and externally. The resulting organization chart dramatically changed the way the park does business in some arenas. While change always brings a modicum of discomfort, the park staff moved together to execute the new structure, work out the problems, and move forward.

Each division in the park, while implementing the new organizational structure reports achievements with regard to excellence in management practices.

Our Resource and Visitor Protection Division prided itself on its flexibility and adaptability. The challenge of providing security to the park's two icons while operating a top-notch law enforcement program continued. In addition, the reorganization created new positions and abolished others. By year's end, the division had a new chief ranger, new operations chief, and new law enforcement specialist.

While maintaining a quality operation within the park, the park's law enforcement staff proudly offered assistance to other parks, demonstrating its commitment to the wider National Park Service mission. The park hosted a Hazwoper class and assisted with

several “use of force” classes. Resource and Visitor Protection personnel also assisted other parks with special events, investigative service, and alarm technician services.

This division continues to strive toward a fully integrated, state of the art, digital alarm system. While work remains on this issue, the progress to date is remarkable.

The Interpretation and Visitor Services Division looked to the future by securing funding for a Long Range Interpretive Plan from the Northeast Regional Office. This project will move forward through a signed agreement with the Harpers Ferry Center. To begin the process, Independence conducted a series of workshops reviewing both the personal and non-personal services currently offered at eighteen park sites. The park created a core team of interpreters to facilitate the planning process, which includes representatives from all park divisions and up to seventy-five key partners. The Interpretation and Visitor Services planning team will develop new park themes, identify key issues and challenges, identify visitor audiences, describe the desired visitor experience, and create a vision statement and a 7–10 year action plan. The Interpretation and Visitor Services team traveled to the Harpers Ferry Center in West Virginia this past summer to reevaluate Independence’s interpretive media with sixteen Harpers Ferry specialists. The Long Range Interpretive Plan should be completed by May of 2006.

Recognizing that park management in the twenty-first century extends beyond National Park Service borders, the park created the Office of Partnership Activities which recognizes the value and potential that partnerships play in the future of Independence and the National Park Service. The Partnership Activities Manager also oversees the Special Events Coordinator and a new full time Volunteer Coordinator.

Internally, the Cultural Resources Management Division continued its work to protect the priceless resources of the park. The Museum Branch oversaw seven contracts to fabricate exhibits, catalog archaeology, and conserve objects. The entire museum staff pitched in to unpack and inventory the entire museum storage collection (7,828 objects) and completed the three mandatory comprehensive museum collection inventories.

The park’s Archivist oversaw contracting for a major, multi-year cataloging project with the intention of reducing or eliminating the catalog backlog. Work on cataloging the 160 linear feet of archival records has started. The Archives Department implemented phase one of electronically converting manual catalog records by adding 5 percent of 17,167 converted catalog cards to ANCS+.

The Curatorial Department designed and implemented a conservation program for two historic cannons installed in Independence Square as part of the landscape restoration project. The Associate Curator worked with a conservator to complete a condition survey of the historic plaster bust and statue collection of twenty-two objects.

Taking care of staff is just as important as taking care of park resources. The Administration Division completed an outstanding year of support to park employees

with a rich and diverse training program. Ten park employees completed their core competencies by finishing the National Park Service fundamentals training regimen.

The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission conducted Equal Opportunity training for supervisors and managers. The four-hour presentation was titled “Effective Internal Harassment Investigation.” Also provided on-site was “Leadership Essentials for Supervisors and Managers.” The Regional Solicitor offered a briefing on “How to Conduct an Administrative Investigation and Prepare the File.”

Human Resources conducted training workshops for all employees on the online procedures for filing a worker’s compensation claim under the Safety Management Information System. Human Resources also coordinated and served as facilitators for the briefing on the new Department of the Interior Employee Performance Appraisal Plan.

As a recommendation from the park’s Committee for Workforce Diversity, the park provided Equal Employment Opportunity training for all non-supervisory employees. This mandatory course titled “Creating a Respectful Workplace,” was conducted by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.

The park had 100% compliance in employees completing required Annual Information Technology Security Awareness Training, and Discrimination and Whistleblowing (No Fear Act) Training within the specified deadline.

Park employees and employees from nearby park areas and the Northeast Regional Office utilized Technology Enhanced Learning Station training hosted by the park.

Equal Employment Opportunity Counselors attended refresher training this year.

### Sustainability

Sustainability at Independence National Historical Park takes many forms. Some involve the physical preservation and operation of buildings into the future while others involve protecting and nurturing our constituency for the years to come.

In September 2005, the park published “Report on the Site Review of our Interpretive Programs by The Organization of American Historians (OAH)” through the Government Printing Office. The report summarizes the group’s 3-day review process in October 2004 and contains an analysis of the reports submitted by reviewers Gary Nash, Emma Lapsansky Werner, Ritchie Garrison and Richard Newman. Since the October 2004 review, the park has begun to implement many of the report’s recommendations. We used the document as already the basis for the park’s new Long Range Interpretive Plan, which is now in draft. The park has also developed a park-wide sign plan, increased staff training and research opportunities, begun to minimize the impact of enhanced security through the development of a new plan, improved the visitor experience with park partners, such as, the Once Upon a Nation program, and continued to incorporate diverse stories into its interpretive programs. We have retained our ties to The Organization of

American Historians team by tapping their expertise as external reviewers of exhibit text and program concepts. We look forward to continued cooperation with them.

The Maintenance Division remains committed to the Facility Management Software System as it moves into its third year of implementation. The park's dedicated support staff recorded and charged all work hours for all Maintenance Division employees to the park's assets, meeting deadlines for the Northeast Region and the Washington Offices. In addition, the entry of our cultural specimens inventory into the Facility Management Software System database increased awareness of what we possess.

Facility Management Software System year-end reports provided a wealth of information about the park's deferred maintenance. This year, the deferred maintenance climbed from \$25 million to \$33 million.

In partnership with the University of Pennsylvania and the Department of Energy, the park discovered that Facility Management Software System supports an additional module to determine energy usage and efficiency. This partnership will enhance the Facility Management Software System efficiency and utilize Facility Management Software System as a decision support tool for energy efficiency.

In preparation for the October 2004 re-opening of the Second Bank, the maintenance staff completed plaster repairs and painting on the first floor. The woodcrafters installed oak flooring for the visitor entrance in the basement. They used 100 percent green product wood made from fallen trees and harvested for the sole purpose of making flooring and/or furniture.

The Maintenance Division replaced humidifiers throughout five buildings of the Independence Hall complex with new efficient and easily maintainable humidifiers.

Carefully monitoring materials and supplies, park staff transformed the park's former visitor center into the Independence Living History Center. An abandoned building returned from mothballs to emerge as a new archaeology center. The park electricians, as part of our "Greening of our Park," installed new energy efficient overhead lights. Our woodcrafters created a new archaeology exhibit area as well as new classrooms for the education program.

The Maintenance Division placed new energy efficient overhead lighting in the Maintenance Facility garage area. Based on the existing electrical usage in the garage, the cost of the replacement will pay for itself in 1.6 years.

At the same time buildings became more energy efficient, the Cultural Resources Management Division worked on caring for park stakeholders and interested citizens. Following up on the public forum that we held in October 2004, Doris Fanelli continued to communicate with stakeholders about the President's House Project. Doris Fanelli organized a meeting in September with the Ad Hoc Historians where participants jointly developed a list of items on which we agree and on which we disagree. She also began

meeting and corresponding with the city in preparation of the Request for Qualifications for the commemoration. To publicize this effort, Doris Fanelli convened a panel about it for the George Wright Society's annual meeting in March. The panel consisted of Doris Fanelli, Jed Levin, Coxey Toogood, and Charlene Mires, Professor of History at Villanova University and a member of the Ad Hoc Historians.

The Cultural Resources Management Division facilitated a civic engagement seminar at Statue of Liberty/Ellis Island in April where staff shared Independence's experiences in this area. Doris Fanelli served as an invited participant on a panel convened by the Northeast Regional Office's Ethnographer on traditionally associated groups. Doris Fanelli presented a paper using St. Thomas church as a case study for identifying and interacting with groups at the annual meeting of the Society for Applied Anthropology.

Looking to the future, the park created a full time Volunteer Coordinator position. This position enhances the park's volunteer program. The inception of this new position resulted in a fifty percent increase of volunteers. Over three hundred individuals now regularly donate their time to the park. The volunteer program received another boost with a grant from the National Park Foundation.

Volunteers in the Library and Archives program donated 2,000 hours of service. They completed a re-housing project of the Research and Study Photograph Collection, from 1950-1995, and the city of Philadelphia Bureau of City Property collection of 13,500 prints and negatives spanning from 1912-1950.

Three major clean-up and gardening events were held in May and June of 2005. Volunteers helped with the Philly Pops concert and provided valuable and necessary visitor services. Volunteers were responsible for the success behind the *Take Pride in America* event to beautify Washington Square Park, and provided much needed assistance in the National Park Service exhibit at the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society's annual Flower Show.

The year 2005 was a significant year for volunteers. At a luncheon in April, over 70 volunteers received honors for outstanding service. Two extraordinary volunteers received special awards, a Presidential Award for exceptional and outstanding service and a Secretary's Award for superb service.

Sustaining and protecting Independence National Historical Park into the future will require the assistance of our partners, neighbors, and stakeholders. During 2005, work with these groups continued to prove to be productive.

The park's former visitor center is now a transformed Independence Living History Center, a major partnership activity. Operating as a three way partnership between the National Constitution Center, the park's education program, and Once Upon A Nation, this building houses a new jewel for the park. The centerpiece of the project is an archaeology lab processing some of the park's archaeological cultural resources under the watchful eyes of the public.

The Friends of Independence National Historical Park have always supported the park and are advocates of many of the programs at the park. The Friends of Independence National Historical Park also support the park through the annual Philadelphia Open House tours.

The Friends of Independence National Historical Park also participated in three major park projects: the reopening of the Second Bank of the United States, the National Park Service exhibit at the Philadelphia Flower Show, and the Four Days of the Fourth Celebration on Independence Mall.

The Independence Mall Business and Residents Coalition has proven to be quite an ally for the park by supporting the park staff and working hard on the July 4<sup>th</sup> events.

During National Park Week, the Independence Mall Business and Residents Coalition hosted a breakfast for all National Park Service staff in Philadelphia. This awesome breakfast indicated to park employees how deeply appreciated we are by the community and included a serenade to Mary Bomar.

Prior to the July Fourth activities, the Independence Mall Business and Residents Coalition put out a call for *Operation Company's Coming*. This widely attended event included park employees and volunteers, and volunteers from our partners, including the Friends of Independence National Historical Park, Lights of Liberty, and the Carpenter's Company of Philadelphia.

The Tour Operators of Philadelphia evolved from an organization that was highly critical of the park into a group of organized National Park Service supporters. This group has been helpful in providing feedback on security operations, parking issues, and visitor flow questions.

Consistent with previous years, fiscal year 2005 brought many Very Important People visitors and special events to the park. These activities prove that individuals from around the world value and treasure this place. This kind of support represents a high level of commitment to the future of the park's resources.

In October 2004, the Honorable Vice Minister Shan Jixang, Director of the State Administration of Cultural Heritage from the Republic of China visited the park. We were honored to host a visit in March 2005 from former French president, Valery Giscard d'Estang. In April 2005, Federico Humbert, Ambassador of Panama to the United States, and Jeffery Jarrett, the Director of the Office of Surface Mining visited the "best park in history."

An impressive special session of the Superior Court of Pennsylvania in the Courtroom of Independence Hall allowed visitors to witness the historical use of the courtroom firsthand.

Governor Edward Rendell tapped the Liberty Bell for the solemn Martin Luther King Jr. day of commemoration and service.

Independence National Historical Park paved the way to help celebrate the extension of equal rights to the gay and lesbian communities by participating in the Equality Forum.

Four Days of the Fourth kicked off in high gear, starting with the Once Upon A Nation's storytelling, adventure tours, twilight activities, and colonial reenactors. Extended hours for the Liberty Bell Center and Independence Hall accommodated the large influx of visitors. The Philly Pops concert was a resounding success, culminating with the dramatic new lighting of Independence Hall.

The July Fourth morning festivities in front of Independence Hall included the first *City of Brotherly Love Humanitarian Award* presented to Sir Elton John. Later in the day, the Sons of the Revolution co-hosted *Let Freedom Ring*.

The 17<sup>th</sup> annual awarding of the Liberty Medal held on September 17, 2005, honored Ukrainian President Victor Yushenko in recognition for his outstanding work in the pursuit of freedom.

In fiscal year 2005, the park issued 444 special event permits with a total number of 40,487 visitors taking part in special event activities. In addition, the Special Events Office issued six horse carriage operation special business permits along with permits for the Lights of Liberty, the Big Bus, and the Philadelphia Trolley Works. The park also responded to 1,325 emails on their website.

The physical surroundings of the park received attention also as the mall partners continued to work on completing the landscaping project. The partners on this project include the City of Philadelphia, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, the Pew Charitable Trusts, the Philadelphia Parking Authority, Independence Visitor Center Corporation, and the National Constitution Center.

The park's visitors experienced an enhanced interpretive program as Independence entered into a partnership with Once Upon A Nation. The Once Upon A Nation program included thirteen storytelling benches, three walking tours, evening performances, and the interactive rendition of the film 1776 in the Independence Living History Center. This effort encouraged visitors to move east beyond Independence Mall and offered the park an opportunity to include multiple aspects of our story in public presentations.

In concert with other park operations, the Resource and Visitor Protection Division has increased its outreach efforts to the community and the park's partners. Improved communications and increased interaction with the Lights of Liberty and Once Upon A Nation have facilitated the presentation of both programs. Involvement in the Community Watch Program and the Police District Advisory council has helped establish the park as an active member of the community. That membership has resulted in increased public reporting of suspicious and criminal activities affecting the park. It has

also garnered increased presence of the Philadelphia Police Department within the park's jurisdiction. The surrounding law enforcement community has not been neglected. Resource and Visitor Protection personnel continue to attend anti-terrorism and law enforcement meetings with members of other federal agencies. Specialized skills and up-to-date classified information are now readily available to the park, thus increasing the safety of the park.

### Conservation

Cultural Resources Management Division worked to preserve the priceless material collections and cultural values that contribute to the park's identity. At the same time, the park worked to conserve the park's stories and to help our visitors readily access those stories.

The park's Chief Curator made refinements to the new, critically acclaimed fine arts exhibit, *People of Independence*, in the Second Bank of the United States and conducted many staff training sessions about it. Curatorial staff developed and installed two temporary exhibits for the Independence Visitor Center and the Merchants' Exchange Building.

The Cultural Resources Management staff completed the inspection and cleaning of the entire Bishop White library collection of 1,127 volumes, and revised and re-equipped the automated environmental monitoring program for 12 remote collection areas within the park.

The Library completed the retrospective conversion project, converting 10,000 library books from the Dewey Classification System to the Library of Congress Classification System and from a hard copy card catalog to National Park Service Voyager On-line Library Catalog and completed a major book-cleaning project. Volunteers cleaned the valuable books in the locked cabinet and assessed conservation needs.

Both the Deshler-Morris and the Bringhurst houses suffered from antiquated utilities, hazardous materials, deteriorating historic fabric, and a lack of basic visitor facilities, (including public restrooms). Staff completed National Environmental Protection Agency and Section 106 compliance. In addition, the park replaced and relocated a 40-year-old heating, ventilation, and air conditioning system, provided a complete fire suppression system, emergency electrical lighting, a video communications link with the park headquarters, subsurface drainage, a new orientation area, and universally accessible ramps. Finally, Cultural Resources Management and Maintenance completed overdue repairs on the original wood and masonry, replaced leaking roofs, improved structural supports, and upgraded plumbing and electrical systems.

Nine triple X's were produced for work on the park's resources.

Research and Publication for the betterment of park resources:

- Chief Historian Jim Mueller organized the table of contents, wrote the editor's introductions, and reviewed all draft chapters submitted for an anthology on abolition in Pennsylvania.
- Isabel Jenkins completed the second draft of the Todd House Furnishing Plan update. She also researched and identified object-based information for park Education Program's website and *Everyday Life in the 18<sup>th</sup> Century* lesson plan.
- The park Librarian completed the *Guide to Cultural Resource Studies in Independence National Historical Park Archives, 1939 – Present*; a finding aid and survey of the park's Cultural Resource reports.
- Doris Devine Fanelli submitted an invited article on the President's House activity to Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography. She also prepared two short articles about Philadelphia for the American Historical Association's upcoming magazine about its January 2006 meeting.
- The Archivist completed a Memorandum of Understanding with the National Archives to establish a Records Management Program for the park. The Assistant Superintendent distributed the park's records management policy and standard operating procedures on compact disk to staff for implementation.

The Preservation Architects, the Cultural Landscape Architect and the Safety Officer developed contract documents and obligated funding for the following projects:

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| • Second Bank Scaffolding Contract                       | \$ 6,000.00   |
| • Second Bank Stone Repairs                              | \$ 363,166.00 |
| • Pemberton House Stoop Renovation                       | \$ 69,000.00  |
| • Independence Hall HSR                                  | \$ 170,000.00 |
| • Bishop White House Dormer restoration                  | \$ 5,990.00   |
| • Deshler Morris House/Bringinghurst Paint Investigation | \$ 24,000.00  |
| • Washington Square Wall Repair                          | \$ 19,000.00  |
| • Merchants' Exchange Building High Lift                 | \$ 5,000.00   |
| • Graffiti Removal, Merchants' Exchange Building         | \$ 700.00     |
| • Masonry Restoration for Washington Square Fountain     | \$ 5,060.00   |
| • Mold remediation: Bishop White House                   | \$ 4,200.00   |
| • Air Monitoring: Bishop White House                     | \$ 1,430.00   |
| • Annual Background Air Monitoring                       | \$ 1,200.00   |
| • Annual Fire Extinguisher Inspection and Maintenance    | \$ 2,400.00   |

The Cultural Resources Management Division provided Contracting Office Technical Representation for:

- Second Bank Utilities Improvement Project, provided construction supervision, and worked to complete the punch list. Project cost: \$3,918,000.00.

- The Deshler Morris House/Bringhurst Utilities Improvement Project totaling \$3,000,000.00.
- Phase II of the survey of exterior stone deterioration on the Merchants' Exchange Building. Project cost: \$68,000.00.
- The rehabilitation of Independence Square. This project included upgrades or replacement of major historic landscape features including walkways, walls, lighting, drainage, and planting.
- Lighting of Independence Hall Tower, which was illuminated as part of the Four Days of the Fourth Celebration
- Landscape installation on the first Block of Independence Mall. This project installed a section of the landscape of the new design of the mall. The project included new walls, walkways, seating, drainage, planting, and the design of an interpretive sign for mounting on construction fencing. Project cost: \$2,300,000.00.
- Developed the planting list and plan for spring planting and the installation of the Olin plan in the Liberty Bell Center Garden. Project cost: \$8,960.00
- Construction of a ramp to improve accessibility for the mobility impaired at the Edgar Allan Poe National Historic Site. Project cost: \$73,000.00.
- The architects also engaged in numerous project reviews. These reviews included such projects as the Rehabilitation of Independence Square, Deshler Morris House Utilities Improvement Plan, Lights of Liberty's new show design, the Center City District Lighting Plan, and the Independence Signage Plan Contract.
- The historic preservation staff attended bi-weekly work order meetings, generated 118 work orders and processed 20 Cultural Resources Management work orders submitted by other divisions.
- Developed schematic design and budget for adaptive reuse of the Declaration House as the Independence Park Institute. Proposed budget: \$2,000,000.00.
- The architects provided direction to the Museum Branch on the development of the Architectural Study Collection.
- Produced specifications for painting of interiors and for the renovation of restrooms for a City Tavern Building Improvement Fund requests.
- Worked with the Independence Living History Center on exits, occupancy issues, door swings, trash, storage, fire extinguishers, first aid kits, flammable storage cabinets, and Material Safety Data Sheets.
- Reviewed documents for the ramp and the north side repair on the Edgar Allan Poe House, the Deshler Morris/Bringhurst project documents, and conducted a level one environmental survey of Washington Square.
- Audited park buildings and provided weekly safety e-mail notices to all park employees.
- Doris Fanelli and Charles Tonetti have begun active negotiations on leasing several park buildings, including Walnut and Locust Street buildings and the First Bank.
- Contributed to the new lease specifications for City Tavern.

Cultural Resources Management staff offered three simultaneous workshops as part of the World Heritage in Young Hands international conference for teachers.

The Library and Archives hosted 822 visitors, cataloged 68 acquisitions, answered 446 reference queries, and 20 website queries. The Archives also hosted 240 researchers. The Library filled 390 orders for photographs.

Interpretation & Visitor Services Division signed a project agreement with the Harpers Ferry Center to develop a Comprehensive Sign Plan for the park, which is a primary goal of the Long Range Interpretive Plan. The project goals will address ongoing ways of finding and identifying National Park Service identity issues throughout the park.

Planning continues for the President's House site interpretation. Working with key park partners, Interpretation & Visitor Services developed a new brochure and wayside exhibit to mark and interpret the site. Ranger conducted power point programs continued throughout the year. Funding is now in place to create permanent exhibits that will interpret the Office of the Presidency and commemorate the enslaved servants who lived there. The park is developing new exhibits and a film on President Washington's extended household, including his enslaved servants, at the Germantown White House.

The park completed program plans to support the Benjamin Franklin 300 citywide anniversary celebration in 2006. Plans include a new temporary exhibit titled "Independence National Historical Park Through Franklin's Eyes," along with a series of ranger conducted programs and special events at Franklin Court throughout the year. The park is working with the Pew Charitable Trusts on a feasibility study to determine if the new Benjamin Franklin 300 special traveling exhibit could be permanently installed in the Franklin Court Underground Museum. Pew is considering a multi-million dollar matching grant to Franklin Court in honor of the Franklin anniversary.

Based on the 2004 Poe Forum recommendations, innovative exhibit approaches are being developed for the empty Poe house and adjacent museum and new permanent exhibits at the Thaddeus Kosciuszko National Memorial will interpret Kosciuszko's life long struggle for human rights in America and Poland. Thanks to a grant from the Copernicus Society of North America, the Division Chief of Interpretation & Visitor Services traveled to Poland to explore potential museum loan agreements to exhibit original Kosciuszko artifacts at the National Memorial in 2007.

Since the park is now part of the National Park Service Network to Freedom, the Interpretation & Visitor Services rangers continue to expand and diversify the park themes in a variety of significant ways including programs on the Underground Railroad and the President's House site. A first person and a power point program featuring Native American history and women's history special events are scheduled to mark the anniversary of the 19<sup>th</sup> amendment to the U. S. Constitution at the Liberty Bell Center and the Germantown White House (Deshler-Morris).

Based on Interpretation & Visitor Services staff focus group recommendations, we offer scheduled interpretive talks at the new Liberty Bell Center, formal tours of the House and Senate Chambers in Congress Hall, Franklin Footstep walking tours, and more interpretive demonstrations for park visitors (especially children) throughout the park. We continue to experiment with program staffing alternatives, including visitor access to some sites by tour only. Other significant program changes will be implemented based on recommendations in the parks Long Range Interpretive Plan.

An Interpretation & Visitor Services Historian delivered a paper on “Practicing History in an Age of Civic Engagement” at the annual George Wright Society. The historian also conducted ongoing research on the President’s House site, Robert Morris, James Dexter, and the free African-American community in 18<sup>th</sup> century Philadelphia.

Interpretation & Visitor Services Division developed a comprehensive in-house training program to enhance ranger knowledge, skills, and ability. The division offered 120 hours of training on 50 subjects last spring that included all park staff and key partners such as Eastern National.

We have filled special request projects for the Northeast Region. One project involved preparing the Regional Director’s Office by making wall repairs and painting. Another project involved making minor repairs and painting the Northeast Regions office kitchen. The largest project was renovating the Northeast Regions training room by building a new stage, wall repairs, and painting and cleaning up the closet area. All costs to perform this work were paid with Northeast Region funds.

### Outdoor Recreation

While Independence National Historical Park’s enabling legislation omits any reference to outdoor recreation, the park does in fact offer passive recreational experiences with its miles of sidewalks and historic landscapes. From local preschoolers who gleefully run across the lawns to the millions of visitors who walk the paths, the park subtly encourages the enjoyment of the outdoors.

For the past 10 years, we have been using the grounds of Gloria Dei Church as an area for the temporary placement of leaves and cut up branches. The debris had accumulated to the point of being an eyesore and a safety and health concern. The Maintenance Division claimed the challenge and took four weeks and 30 dumpsters to clean up all the debris.

The Olmsted Center staff performed a condition assessment of our trees to determine trees in immediate need of pruning. In addition to the condition assessment, the Olmsted Center plans on removing hazardous branches as part of their mentor training program in Fiscal Year 2006. The Olmsted Center also plans to provide training for other National Park Service employees with the assistance of our expert tree-pruning employees in proper tree management.

We maintained a high quality of service to our partners, including Historic Philadelphia Incorporated and the Lights of Liberty. We replaced one of the two outside condenser units for the Free Quaker Meeting House. Due to the increase in trash, we added additional trash removal times for the Free Quaker Meeting House. We assisted Once Upon A Nation with storage of their benches in our rented garage for this year. During the upgrade of the Lights of Liberty systems we assisted whenever they needed a mechanic, electrician, and in some cases gardeners. We supplied technical assistance as they modified their system on the roof of the Franklin court Underground Museum. We also provided extra tree trimming for the Lights of Liberty program when necessary.

During Operation Company's Coming, and the Washington Square Association's spring and fall clean up, the Maintenance Division worked with the Independence Mall Business & Residents Coalition and the Washing Square Association by preparing three major blocks for planting. We delivered the topsoil, mulch, miscellaneous materials, and tools at the locations needed. The Independence Mall Business & Residents Coalition directly purchased the annual plantings and our grounds staff picked up the purchased goods. The Maintenance Division grounds crew provided clean up.

A partnership with Once Upon A Nation enables visitors to enjoy storytelling and historical vignettes outside where many of the original stories took place. Visitors are able to stroll around the grounds and experience the way life might have been like in the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

Safety training included Hantavirus training and Asbestos Awareness training.

### 21<sup>st</sup> Century Relevance

Independence looks forward to the coming years with confidence and anticipation while acknowledging a responsibility to maintain a connection to neighbors and visitors to be relevant not only for the local park but also for the entire National Park Service.

The park accepts this challenge by continuing to work toward a great understanding of our visitors, by striving for greater diversity both in human services and interpretive offerings, by seeking to utilize the best advanced technology, and by identifying and reaching out to underserved populations.

The physical appearance of the park symbolizes this commitment as the park and its partners continue work on completing the landscaping on Independence Mall. The year ahead will bring that project to virtual completion making the environment much more hospital for visitors and park neighbors.

Planning continues on several fronts to develop formal education programs and learning centers at Independence, thanks to a \$3 million grant from the William Penn Foundation. The Interpretation & Visitor Service's Education Branch completed field-testing on the "Daily Life and Diversity in 18<sup>th</sup> Century Philadelphia" program. They are creating three new learning spaces at the Independence Living History Center that will feature

archaeology, 18<sup>th</sup> century life, and the life of Benjamin Franklin. Two of these classrooms opened in November 2005, and the third will be available in early 2006. Planning has also begun on converting the Declaration House into four additional learning spaces, and this work should be completed by fall 2007. The Independence Park Institute website is now available to take school group reservations on-line. The staff have produced several Independence Park Institute publications including school program menus, Independence Park Institute Brochure (which was distributed to all 388 National Park Service site), and quarterly Independence Park Institute Update newsletters. For teachers and students who do not participate in our formal programs, they can pick up free educational activity packets anytime to learn more on Franklin, Jefferson, and Independence Square.

As we look to the future, we find that productivity demands are increasing. Independence assumed personnel management responsibility for two outside parks and assumed acquisition management responsibility for six parks. We migrated to the active directory, provided onsite training on Leadership Essentials/Merit System Principles, Creating a Respectful Workplace, Conducting Administrative Investigations, EO Training for Supervisors, IT Security and Whistleblower training. Independence also provided a briefing on the new Performance Appraisal system.

The task of maintaining the park's Project Management Integrated System is now under the jurisdiction of the Maintenance Division. There have been three major cleanup requests with due dates during the beginning of the year. Through monthly meetings headed by the Chief of Maintenance, data accumulated over six plus years was cleared within the scheduled time.

During the negotiations for the Poe House ramp project in September 2004, it became obvious that the funding level available would have prevented the awarding of the contract. Independence determined that the Maintenance staff could handle some of the tasks. Collaboration with the woodworkers who built the ramp/fence, the painters who finished the ramp/fence, and the electricians, who added the connections necessary for the operation of an entrance gate, saved the park a lot of money.

As part of the Maintenance Division's commitment to our fellow parks we sent two of our employees on a fire detail during the months of July and August to assist with fire fighting tasks. We also committed some employee assistance to parks affected by Hurricane Katrina by sending five employees from the park.

Through contacts with Mastery Charter High School, we acquired two students to work in the Maintenance Division during the summer of 2005. Both students were satisfied with their work assignment, with one student staying for part of the summer in a mentoring program.

Two employees, a laborer and a custodial leader in the Maintenance Division, were given the opportunity of working outside their sections, enabling them a learning environment. Additionally, a gardener was given a twice a week task to perform an inventory of

cultural specimens so that the data could be entered into the Facility Management Software System program.

Independence National Historical Park looked to the future to increase visitor services and resource protection by identifying and using new funding sources.

- Pew Charitable Trusts
- National Park Foundation
- Copernicus Society
- \$3 million grant from William Penn Foundation

Independence used innovative techniques by utilizing over 10,940 hours of public volunteer service to support the mission of the park.

We administered cooperative agreements with the Independence Visitor Center Corporation, reached a cooperative agreement with the Benjamin Franklin Tercentenary Commission, managed the conversion of City Tavern from a concession to a lease, and worked with the Philadelphia Parking Authority to extend the lease on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Street parking garage.