

CONGRESSIONAL FRIENDS OF THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE CENTENNIAL NEWSLETTER

2016
National Park Service
CENTENNIAL



November 2015

We Honor You

Many national parks have direct connections to the military. There are dozens of battlefields, military parks, and historic sites that commemorate the service of American veterans. In addition, every national park is part of our collective identity that defines who we are and where we come from as a nation. They are tactile reminders of the values, the ideals, the freedoms that our veterans protect. The place that taught me the most about the sacrifice and commitment of our veterans was the World War II Memorial on the National Mall. Sitting between the Washington Monument, dedicated to the man who fathered our country, and the memorial to Abraham Lincoln, the man who preserved our freedom, the World War II Memorial represents a nation that defended the idea of freedom not just for themselves but for the freedom of people they would never meet or know.

As a former Park Ranger at this site, I told the stories of this conflict using the art and design features of the memorial. I met with thousands and thousands of people who would stop and listen to my talks or ask a few questions, but it was my interactions with the veterans that brought the true spirit of the memorial to life.

They would come by the busload, brought by their families and friends or as part of an honor flight from their local VFW. They would arrive proudly wearing hats and pins representing their unit, team, or branch of service.



Most veterans would come in wheelchairs or with the assistance of a caregiver to help them navigate around the site. Some would even wear their original military uniform that they had kept for 60 years or more—waiting for just this type of opportunity to show their stripes one more time. “It still fits!” they would say with smiles on their faces as they toured the pathways through the memorial. These veterans usually attracted the attention they deserved, with many other visitors stopping to applaud their entrance or to shake their hands and thank them for their service.

We Honor You continued on page 4

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

NOVEMBER 2015

This November we honor those who served and we celebrate Native Americans. Check your local park for events or visit www.FindYourPark.com and search through the nationwide schedule. The [Find Your Park calendar](#) is continually being updated so keep checking back as new events are added every week.

NOVEMBER 7

LIME BURN AND TOWN LIFE EVENT

FORT FREDERICA NATIONAL MONUMENT

GEORGIA

EXPERIENCE LIFE OF THE SETTLERS AT THE FORT AND SEE A LIMERICK BURN DEMONSTRATION IN THE EVENING.

WWW.NPS.GOV/FOFR

NOVEMBER 11

VETERANS DAY (FEE FREE DAY)

NATIONWIDE

EXPLORE THE SITES THAT COMMEMORATE AMERICA'S MILITARY CONFLICTS AND HONOR THOSE WHO SERVED.

WWW.NPS.GOV/FINDAPARK/MILITARY-HONOR

NOVEMBER 14

MILITARY APPRECIATION DAY

LAKE MEAD NATIONAL RECREATION AREA

NEVADA

VETERANS, MILITARY MEMBERS, AND THEIR FAMILIES ARE INVITED TO PARTICIPATE IN FREE AND HEAVILY DISCOUNTED ACTIVITIES.

WWW.NPS.GOV/LAKE

NOVEMBER 14

CADETTE GIRL SCOUT PATCH DAY

CASA GRANDE RUINS NATIONAL MONUMENT

ARIZONA

EARN THE PRESERVATION PAL PATCH AND LEARN HOW TO PROTECT HISTORY.

WWW.NPS.GOV/CAGR

NOVEMBER 11, 2015 – NOVEMBER 11, 2016

TRAVELING EXHIBIT: "OUR LETTERS HOME"

CHARLES YOUNG BUFFALO SOLDIERS NATIONAL MONUMENT

OHIO

LETTERS FROM COLONEL CHARLES YOUNG AND OTHER BUFFALO SOLDIERS WILL BE EXHIBITED AROUND THE COUNTRY THROUGHOUT THE YEAR.

WWW.NPS.GOV/CHYO

NOVEMBER 15

AMERICA RECYCLES DAY

POINT REYES NATIONAL SEASHORE, CALIFORNIA

BANDELIER NATIONAL MONUMENT, NEW MEXICO

BRING IN YOUR ELECTRONIC WASTE FOR RECYCLING.

WWW.NPS.GOV/PORE

WWW.NPS.GOV/BAND

NOVEMBER 6, 11, 17,
AND 25

STAR PARTIES!

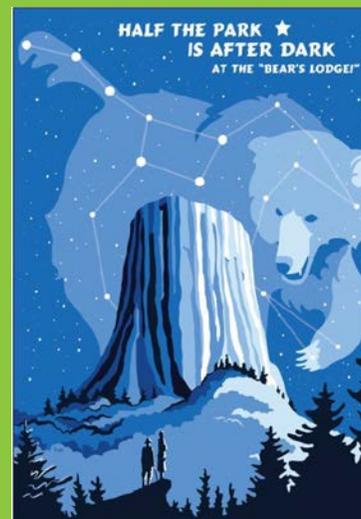
DEVILS TOWER NATIONAL
MONUMENT

WYOMING

JOIN A STAR PARTY TO
CELEBRATE AND SHARE IN
THE BEAUTY OF OUR DARK
NIGHT SKIES.

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FIND YOUR PARK

FINDYOURPARK.COM



Native American Heritage

Ocmulgee National Monument's
Annual Indian Festival

In November, we highlight the history and culture of American Indians, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiians during [National American Indian Heritage Month](#). From battlefields and historic trails to recreation areas and historic preservation, the National Park Service commemorates the contributions of Native American cultures to the American story. The historical, cultural, and spiritual relationship that these groups have with park lands, sites, vistas, and resources are solidified as these places are their ancestral homelands and important resources in maintaining cultural identity.

Many sites were created specifically to preserve the remains of cultures that no longer exist, such as [Mesa Verde National Park](#) or [Russell Cave National Monument](#). Some tell the story of a vibrant culture that continues to contribute to the American way of life, as with [Canyon de Chelly National Monument](#). Others commemorate American Indian cultures that contributed to the development of an area, such as [Cape Cod National Seashore](#), or were part of greater events in American history, such as [Pea Ridge National Military Park](#). Still others preserve the historical contributions of Native cultures throughout time; included in these are [Pipestone National Monument](#) and [Kaloko-Honokohau National Historical Park](#).

In addition to system units, the NPS supports the preservation of Native American history and culture through [cultural resource programs](#). Through a variety of grants, technical assistance programs, and partnerships, the NPS supports the efforts of American Indians, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiians to preserve their cultural heritage in communities nationwide.

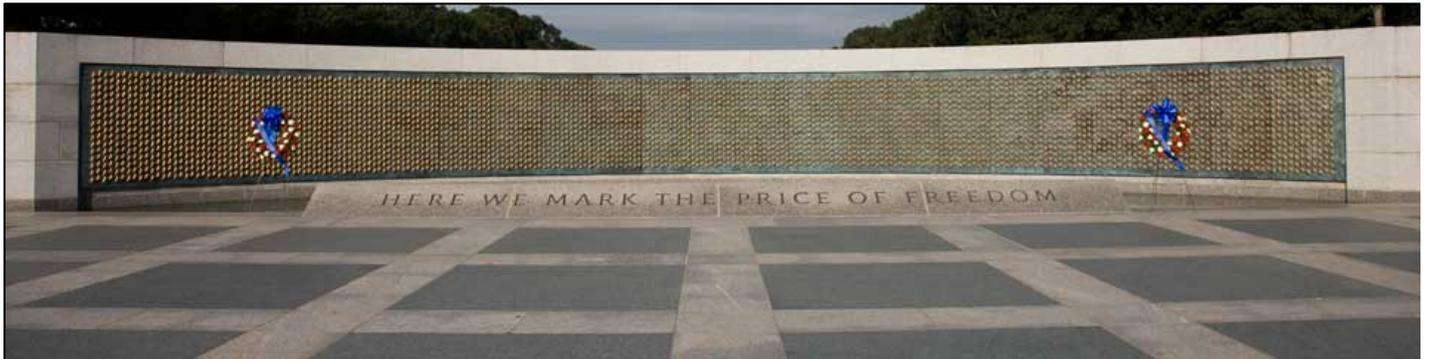
As we approach the centennial in 2016, it is important to recognize the capacity for engagement with more diverse and youthful audiences through the stories and histories of the American Indian experience.

The parks are here to preserve our resources, but they can also help us heal as a nation overall. Diversity and inclusion are key goals for our future, and recognizing and understanding the heritage and cultures of others is a step in the right direction.



Montezuma's Castle National Monument in Arizona

I remember one particular visitor who came as part of a group from my home state of Wisconsin. He was 89 years old, but sprightly in his enjoyment to be there. At first, we talked about what he did in the war, where he was stationed, and what his life was like before he left. He served in the European theater as a radioman. He remembered how his family and community at home supported him and how he had cherished their letters and photos. He didn't speak of the enemy but rather focused on the people he loved and the friendships he forged with his unit while overseas. He was quick to point out that even though it was a tough time, they were all in it together and everyone pitched in whether it was kids collecting tin cans or housewives driving rivets to make aircraft. The nation supported the cause and each other.



Then we came to the field of stars at the center of the memorial. If you have never been, the field of stars at the memorial represents those servicemen and women who were killed in the war. Engraved in stone at the front of the stars are the words: "Here We Mark the Price of Freedom." The veteran quietly asked me, "How many stars?" I told him that there were 4,048 stars, and that each star represented 100 American military deaths equaling over 400,000 Americans who had lost their lives. His eyes welled with tears and he gently took my hand. "Such great loss..." he whispered. I found myself in this incredibly personal moment with this now frail man while he wept as he remembered everything that war meant to him: anger, pain, grief, duty, pride, victory. Finally, everything around us, the rush of the fountains, the chatter of school groups, the rumble of traffic, all disappeared and we commemorated the dead with our silence.

The military memorials and historic places throughout the National Park Service serve as places of healing and honor for our nation's veterans, but they also serve as reminders to all of us that the wealth and greatness of our country comes with a cost, a cost which should never be forgotten.

On Veterans Day, or any day, honor those who have served and sacrificed for our country with a visit to a national park.



Photo: [Christy Frink \(Flickr\)](#)

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Centennial Event of the Month

Each month this section highlights a park or program Centennial event. Centennial events can be small and intimate, such as a kids program in the local community, or grand, such as a concert or a naturalization ceremony. Either way, the options are endless with more events being added to the calendar every day. Check the [Find Your Park website calendar](#) or your [local park calendar](#) for events near you.

A Journey of Hope, Healing and Empowerment

In commemoration of the end of the Civil War, the establishment of the National Park Service, and the passage of the Civil and Voting Rights Acts, [Little Rock Central High School National Historic Site](#) will host a Social Conscience Gathering on November 20-22, 2015, in Little Rock, AR. The Gathering is intended to explore the legacy of the Civil War and Reconstruction, gender inequality, the state of American and global historical education, and a variety of



Little Rock Central High School

other topics intended to inspire participants to begin a journey from awareness to action.

The three-day dialogue will bring together academics, activists, artists, clergy, and policy makers to discuss the far-reaching impact of the civil rights movement, identify barriers to social change, cultivate empathy for other people and cultures, and explore ways to forge new paths toward global equality. The keynote speakers will include Andrew Young, a former U.S. Ambassador and Congressman; Dr. Freeman A. Hrabowski, President of the University of Maryland, Baltimore County; Dr. Asghar Zommordian, Professor of Public Policy at Walden University; noted journalist D. Watkins; and Major Neill Franklin, a 34-year veteran of the Maryland State Police. Also attending will be Minnejean Brown Trickey, one of the famous “Little Rock 9” whose integration into Little Rock Central High School in 1957 galvanized the civil rights movement.

Of this event, Little Rock Central High School Project Historian Eric S. Singer noted that, “As a unit of the National Park Service, we are committed to preserving our most valuable cultural resource – our history. We are also committed to fostering a healthier and more equitable society for all who inhabit the planet.” For more information about the Social Conscience Gathering, visit www.socialconsciencegathering2015.com.

Find a Park Experience

You have already received the invitation to **Find Your Park**, and on top of this, we invite you to explore how park experiences can make national parks a part of your life. Check out www.FindYourPark.com/find and browse through the featured experiences.

No time to travel? Some of the experiences are virtual so you can **Find Your Park** right from your home, or anywhere!

Click on a box below to get started or go to www.nps.gov/experiences/experiences-search and explore the full list.



Drinking the Rain at Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park

📍 Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park

[READ MORE](#)



Dive Into the Kelp Forests of the Channel Islands Without Getting Wet

🖥️ Virtual 📍 Channel Islands National Park

[READ MORE](#)



Camp within Thirteen miles from the White House

📍 Greenbelt Park

[READ MORE](#)

Found your park and have a great story to tell?

Share it on FindYourPark.com!

FOR MORE INFORMATION...

Who else is a Congressional Friend of the National Park Service Centennial? You can find a full list of Friends on the [NPS Office of Legislative and Congressional Affairs](#) and the [NPS Centennial](#) websites. Know a colleague who may be interested? See our contact below:

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