



News from White Haven

Ulysses S. Grant National Historic Site, dedicated to Civil War General and 18th President Ulysses S. Grant and his wife, Julia Dent Grant, is located in south St. Louis County, Missouri.

[News from White Haven](#) is a quarterly publication of Ulysses S. Grant NHS. It is also available online by visiting www.nps.gov/ulsg/.

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New address? Going green?

Update us on your new address or subscribe to [News from White Haven](#) by e-mail by e-mailing ulsg_interpretation@nps.gov or calling the park at 314-842-3298 x245.

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

Ulysses S. Grant NHS Receives Library Donation



Albert Banks III and Brad Fudge unload Dr. Simon's books at the park.

On Tuesday, March 30, Pam Sanfilippo, Albert Banks III and Brad Fudge traveled to Carbondale, IL, to pick up approximately 1,800 books donated to the site by Mrs. Harriet F. Simon, widow of Dr. John Y. Simon.

Mrs. Simon contacted Pam earlier this year regarding the books her husband collected over his long career as professor of history, executive director of The U.S. Grant Association and editor of [The Papers of Ulysses S. Grant](#). Interested in donating them where they would be accessible to students and researchers, she initially considered a university library.

Staff quickly recognized the collection's value and Pam

shared her thoughts with Mrs. Simon that, "We would be honored to receive the collection, to greatly enhance the current library and to link our historic site further with the distinguished legacy left by Dr. Simon."

Mrs. Simon agreed to donate the books to the site, and we prepared to pick them up. The next steps include cataloging into the park library system, affixing bookplates identifying each book as part of the John Y. Simon collection, and shelving them.

We are extremely grateful for this donation, and look forward to announcing a dedication honoring the addition of this collection later this year.

National Parks: National Diversity, National Identity

As we look to celebrating National Parks Week on April 19-25, we are reminded that the diversity of the nation is reflected in the parks themselves. With nearly 400 national parks throughout the country it is no wonder that they are considered America's best idea.



National parks preserve and interpret small and large wonders, such as pollination at George Washington Carver National Monument at left, and the Queen's Laundry hot spring at Yellowstone National Park at right.

Most people think of places such as Yellowstone or Mammoth Cave when they think of national parks, but that is only one of many designations used to identify parks in the NPS. National monuments and memorials include the Statue of Liberty and the Washington Monument, reflecting the country's ideals and the esteem in which we hold those who have faithfully served the nation. Similarly, national battlefields ranging from Yorktown and Ft. Necessity to Wilson's Creek and Vicksburg commemorate the sacrifices made at those places.

National historic sites and historical parks such as Ulysses S. Grant and Central High School recognize the contributions individuals played in bringing the country closer to the ideals of freedom and equality. National rivers and seashores such as Indiana Dunes or Buffalo River represent the beauty of our country and also the natural resources available to us.

And the possibilities for enjoying our national parks are just as diverse: recreation, inspirational moments, and educational opportunities, to name a few.

But the diversity does not stop there—the jobs and the people who hold them are equally diverse: laborer, curator, secretary, park ranger, superintendent, biologist, law enforcement officer, and many others. There are as many differences in the individuals as there are positions.

So during National Parks Week, when all entrance fees are being waived, or any other time, take the opportunity to get out and enjoy your national parks in your neighborhood and around the country—there's a place in them waiting for you!

Civil War Sesquicentennial Planning Marches Forward

Plans for commemorating the sesquicentennial of America's Civil War, nicknamed CW150, are developing at the local, state and national levels, and Ulysses S. Grant NHS is involved in many of them.

“Freedom's Gateway: St. Louis in the Civil War” has planned signature events each year of the commemoration, and will have a Web presence where

you can plan visits and travels to learn about St. Louis' role in the Civil War. Watch this newsletter and our website (www.nps.gov/ulsg) for links when the website goes live this June. The Midwest region of the NPS is implementing its plan for the commemoration, which can also be viewed on our Web site.

Additionally, we are working

with the NPS' national Civil War Sesquicentennial team and its partners. You can visit the website at <http://cwar.nps.gov/civilwar> to find a current Calendar of Events throughout the country from now until 2015, including links to all of the state CW150 commissions, and to find tourism, history, and educational resources all in one spot.

Spotlight on the Park: Laundry Room Floor

Since the completion of the restoration to the stone building behind White Haven, the debate has gone on about whether or not to add a wood floor to the laundry room.



The current dirt floor in the laundry room poses problems for maintaining the building and for conducting programs.

When considering making changes to historic structures a park must provide evidence that supports the change. Archeological digs did not reveal clear evidence of the type of floors in this building in the 19th century. Our historic structures report suggested that compacted dirt be used, but also stated that if a dirt floor is “disadvantageous in terms of maintaining exhibits,” then an alternative material could be considered.

Since archeological evidence revealed a wood floor in the winter kitchen it was reasoned that if wood existed there, then possibly wood floors existed in the stone building. Thus, a new wood floor should be in the laundry room this spring.

A fond farewell to Larry Lapinski

On March 31, 2010, Larry Lapinski put on his National Park Service uniform and greeted visitors for the last time. After seven and a half years with the NPS, Larry hung up his ranger hat and retired. He started with the NPS in 2002 when he started as a seasonal park guide at Jefferson National Expansion Memorial in downtown St. Louis. He then moved to Ulysses S. Grant National Historic Site working as a seasonal, then in a term position, then in a permanent job as a park guide.

His work for the NPS is only the latest contribution to public service. He served as a Marine for a little more than 3



Larry Lapinski Lieutenent Colonel in July 1998.

years, starting in 1970; then Larry went into the Army Reserves. He retired as a Lieutenant Colonel in July 1998. In retirement Larry is anxious to spend more time with his two grandsons in Colorado, knowing how quickly they will grow up. He and his wife, Donna, also plan on seeing more of the country. Of course, he won't be putting the NPS too far behind him, as he will have his passport book with him to stop in at NPS sites along their way. Larry, we wish you safe and happy travels!

Kids' Corner: Different Parks and Activities

The National Park Service preserves all kinds of parks! Make a list of all of the parks mentioned in this issue of News from White Haven. (We counted fourteen.) Then put an N by the parks you think preserve nature, and an H by the parks you think preserve history.

Look over your list and pick two parks that you've never visited. List one activity for each that you think you would like to do there.

Now pick two different parks and list one way for each that you can help the park rangers at that park preserve history or



nature at that park.

Now, with an adult's help, pick one park you would like to visit and find their Web page on the NPS Web site, www.nps.gov. Read about the park and what it preserves, and see if there are any activities or ways to preserve the parks that you can add to the lists you just made.



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Upcoming Events

- April 24: Junior Ranger Day at Ulysses S. Grant NHS and other NPS sites across the country.
- April 25: Dr. George Frein presents as Mark Twain at Ulysses S. Grant NHS, 1 p.m.
- May 2-4: U.S. Grant Association annual meeting in Starkville, MS. Visit <http://library.msstate.edu/USGrant/> for more details.
- June 7: Teacher workshop, “A Terrible Calamity: The Civil War in St. Louis,” at Jefferson Barracks. Call 314-655-1635 for reservations.

Did you know?

Ulysses S. Grant NHS has seen 10 archeological digs over a period of 13 years. All have produced a wealth of information, but the investigations that revealed the most artifacts and consequently connect more directly to lives at White Haven were those conducted in the stone building.

Artifacts discovered in this building date from 1835 to

1880, corresponding to the period of use by the Dents, Grants, and enslaved men, women and children. These objects examined together suggest the use of the spaces as laundry room and kitchen. Individual objects speak to the lives of those using the rooms for work and also for relaxation. Objects such as marbles, dominos, pipes and a jaw-harp show that these rooms were used for more

than work. Since the building is considered primarily work space it is assumed that these objects belonged to the Dents’ slaves. Objects such as china, glassware, and utensils also reveal elements of the lives of the Dents and the Grants, and suggest a degree of wealth and social status. Representative pieces are on display in the stone building and in the park museum.