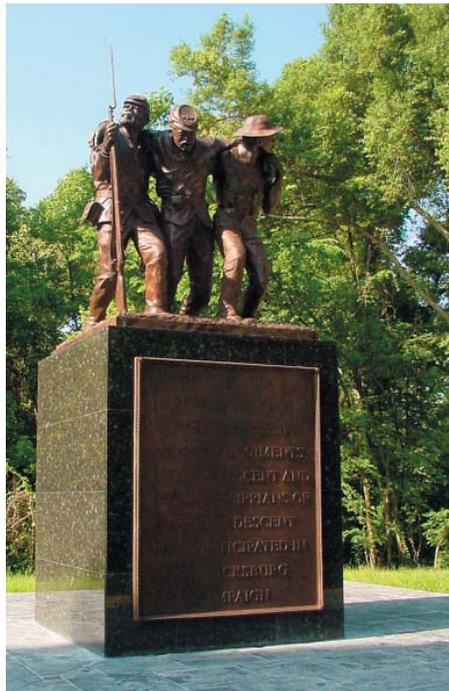
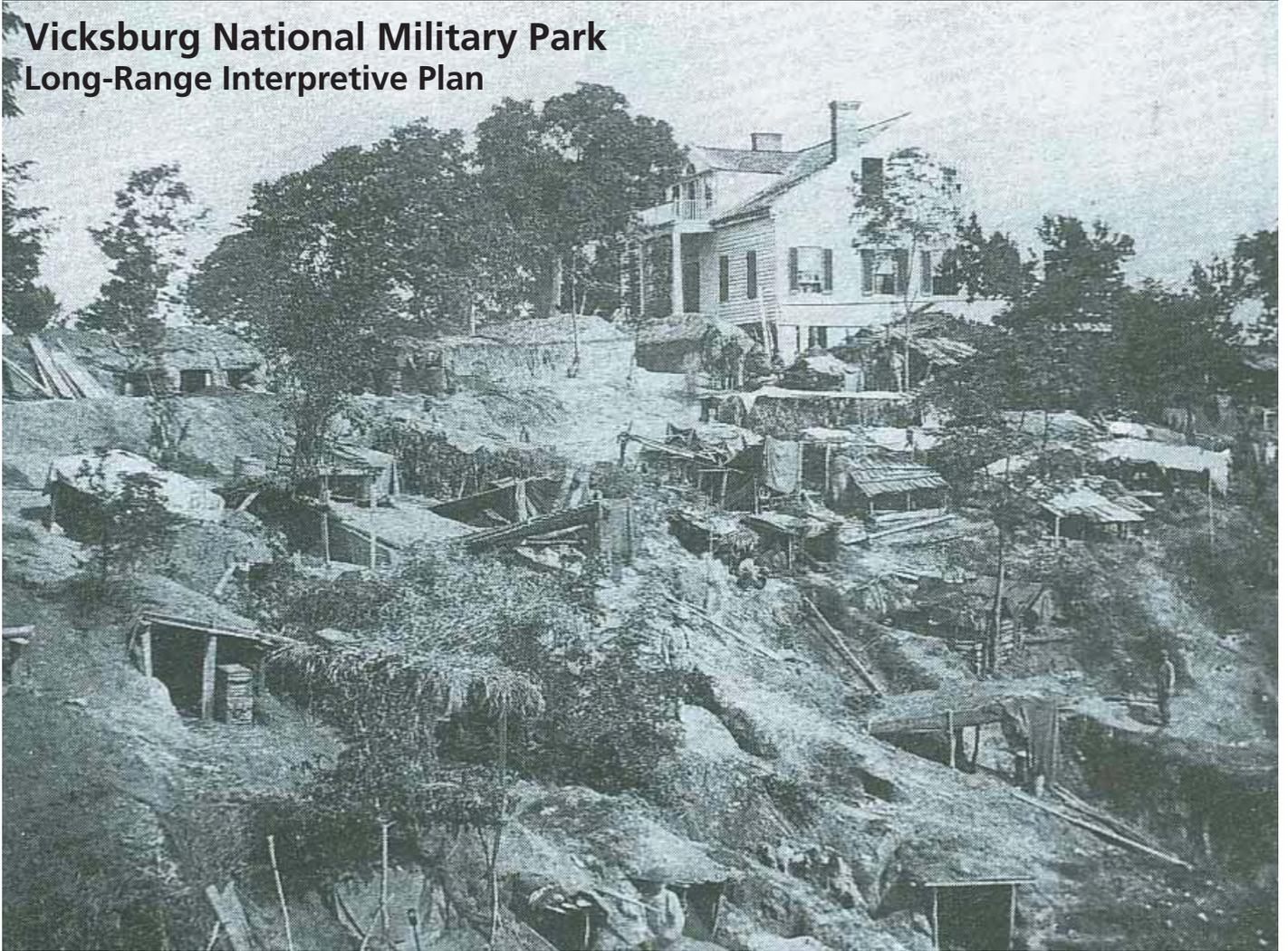




## Vicksburg National Military Park Long-Range Interpretive Plan



# Vicksburg National Military Park Long-Range Interpretive Plan

June 2010

Prepared by:  
National Park Service  
Harpers Ferry Center - Interpretive Planning  
and the staff of Vicksburg National Military Park

Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

Cover Photo: (top) View of Shirley House Surrounded by Union Army Trenches; (bottom - left to right) USS Cairo; Vicksburg National Cemetery Gates; African American Monument; General Pemberton's Headquarters, present; Image of Living History Program Cannon Firing

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School Group Visiting the Park



## United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE  
Vicksburg National Military Park  
3201 Clay Street  
Vicksburg, Mississippi 39183-3495



August 2010

Dear Friends,

I am pleased to share this Long Range Interpretive Plan for Vicksburg National Military Park. The document is intended to serve as a blueprint to focus and guide the park's education and interpretive programming for about the next ten years. Approval of the plan could not have come at a more opportune time, as the decade ahead promises to unfold as another exciting and important chapter in the history of the park.

Very soon, the National Park Service will open a new facility – Pemberton's Headquarters in Vicksburg's downtown area. This grand historic structure will provide an inspiring venue from which stories of both the siege and life in the 19<sup>th</sup> century can be shared with visitors.

Beginning in 2011 and continuing through 2015 the nation will commemorate the sesquicentennial (150<sup>th</sup> anniversary) of the Civil War. During these years, special programming, events, and media attention will combine to inspire citizens and foreign visitors to discover (or rediscover) America's battlefields. Many will take the opportunity to further explore the causes and consequences of the war; some may also seek to learn more about their personal heritage and strive to retrace the paths in which their ancestors walked.

Soon after the sesquicentennial, in 2016, the National Park Service will celebrate its 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary. This celebration promises to provide even more opportunities to establish and cultivate connections between visitors and the nationally significant resources that we protect.

The Long Range Interpretive Plan consolidates the purpose and significance of the park with current scholarship of the Civil War, Reconstruction, and 19<sup>th</sup> century America, into new interpretive themes to be used for the education and inspiration of current and future generations. This tool will be most valuable as we work among staff and with partners to prepare for the events noted above, as well as in our ongoing park operations. I would like to thank all who assisted and supported development of the plan.

Sincerely,

R. Michael Madell  
Superintendent



## Mississippi



## Vicksburg

Vicksburg National Military Park is located in Vicksburg, Mississippi and Madison Parish, Louisiana.

# INTRODUCTION

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On February 21, 1899 Congress established Vicksburg National Military Park (hereafter “VNMP”) --- the fifth civil war battlefield and the seventh national park area set aside to honor American Civil War veterans. The park was established to “commemorate the campaign and siege and defense of Vicksburg, and to preserve the history of the battles and operations of the siege and defense on the ground where they were fought”. The administration of Civil War battlefields was transferred from the War Department to the National Park Service (NPS) through Executive Order No. 6166, on June 10, 1933.

During the past twenty years two significant pieces of legislation were enacted that expanded the park’s boundaries, facilities and scope of interpretation:

- On May 28, 1990 parklands were expanded to include “Grant’s Canal” in Madison Parish, Louisiana, a surviving feature connected with the Union Army’s 9-month campaign (October 1862 – July 1863) to gain control of the Mississippi River by capturing one of the Confederate Army’s remaining fortresses along the river in the community of Vicksburg, MS. This landmark legislation also significantly expanded the scope of the interpretive program beyond the interpretation of the battlefield and surviving fortifications to include “the history of Vicksburg under Union occupation during the Civil War and Reconstruction”.
- On October 11, 2002 legislation authorized the park to acquire the historic house in Vicksburg, MS used by Confederate General John C. Pemberton as his headquarters from May 23 until the Confederate surrender on July 4, 1863. This structure is where General Pemberton and his staff met on July 3, 1863 and made their fateful decision to surrender Vicksburg. The impact of this decision was far reaching -- for Vicksburg residents, General Pemberton’s surrender marked the beginning of Union Army occupation and reconstruction; and, simultaneous Union victories at Vicksburg, MS and Gettysburg, PA marked the decisive turning point in the Civil War. Currently, the park is working to restore this historic site and prepare for its opening.

The Southeast Regional Office of Interpretation and the park staff began working together to update park themes in July 2005. This notable planning effort led the park to seek Servicewide funding to undertake comprehensive interpretive planning with the National Park Service’s Center for Media Services in Harpers Ferry, West Virginia. Servicewide, the Center is commonly known as Harpers Ferry Center or HFC. Following the receipt of planning funding, in January 2007, an HFC interpretive planner met with park staff to develop the project scope of work.

This LRIP is concurrent with all park planning documents. The plan outlines recommendations for the next decade. Recommendations address future interpretive and curriculum-based education services, facilities, interpretive media and partnerships that support the delivery of the interpretive program. Park staff, partners, stakeholders, historians, and media specialists worked together to develop this plan. The intended audience for the LRIP includes park and Regional Office staff, partners, stakeholders, media specialists and future contractors. The goal of this plan is to protect park resources by fostering in park visitors important connections to the meanings inherent in these resources and support for their preservation; and, for the staff that serves the public and communicates park values a strong foundation to provide excellence in interpretation.

### **This plan recommends:**

- **Seek funding to restore Vicksburg National Military Park interpretive staffing levels** to meet basic operating requirements. Restore position funding to the FY03 operating level, as described in the approved park organizational chart; and, provide additional funds to staff the newly acquired Pemberton’s Headquarters. Program increase needed: two GS 9 park ranger positions; two GS 5 park guide positions; and the restoration of funding for three “subject to furlough” positions to “full-time equivalent” status. During the LRIP workshops historians, park staff and partners defined a robust future interpretive program; achievement of future program goals is contingent on a fully funded operation.
- **Seek funding to establish a formal education program.** The purpose of the education program, which enhances and extends the interpretive program, is to present the park story through curriculum-based materials, in an engaging and informative manner through multi-disciplinary and multi-sensory approaches. Students need to understand multiple perspectives and linkages to connect the stories of the Vicksburg Campaign and the Civil War to broader American history. Funding will be requested to establish a GS-11 education specialist. This person will be tasked with the responsibility to develop lesson plans to integrate into school curricula, to develop teacher workshops to educate teachers on the park’s story and the resources available through the site, and to develop educational partnerships with related park sites and educational institutions to expand curricular materials to a wider audience.

- **Instituting visitor experience planning:** the average visitor length of stay is 2.5 – 3 hours. Organize visitor opportunities thematically with realistic time estimates for each experience identified. Park themes can be grouped into four general categories: “The Military Experience”, “The Civilian Experience”, “The African-American Experience”, and “Commemoration”. Help visitors plan their VNMP experience in recognition of park themes, visitor experience goals, park resources and the average visitor length of stay. Using this model, in the future visitors can make decisions regarding how best to experience the park during their visit and what to defer to a later park visit – whether it’s the following day, or in several years.
- **Arrival Experience:** Recommendations include the following elements:
  - Develop a wayfinding/sign master plan for the park.
  - Work to improve visitor safety and traffic flow in the visitor center parking lot and along Clay Street at the intersection of the park entrance.
- **Visitor Center,** recommendations include the following elements:

Short-term:

- Consult with Harpers Ferry Center (HFC) to develop a cost-estimate to proceed with recommended short-term exhibit repairs to improve visitor center operations, including:
  - Establish one visitor information desk and enhance welcoming and trip planning services with the Vicksburg Visitor Convention Bureau.
  - Develop a trip planning exhibit that supports the four recommended thematic park experiences.
  - Address accessibility elements needed for the fiber optic map.
  - Improve the diorama exhibits with new lighting, exhibit signs and restore the audio programs created for each diorama.
  - Install the new park orientation film, under production at this writing.
  - Coordinate with Eastern National to develop a more clearly defined pathway to the park’s auditorium, during the upcoming redesign of the park’s bookstore.

Long-term recommendation:

- Seek funding to develop new exhibits for the visitor center. Develop a funding strategy with HFC to plan, design and construct new exhibits. As the park moves forward to correct current visitor center deficiencies, considering the investment of project funds and staff time, an important future discussion will address: when should the park move forward to plan for the design and installation of new visitor center exhibits. This future conversation can guide the future park/HFC collaborative approach regarding cost-estimating needs to accomplish a new exhibit design/build contract and the submittal of this information in the NPS Project Management Information System (PMIS) funding request system.

- **Return the battlefield tour route to its original clockwise orientation** in order to improve the visitor experience and the delivery of the interpretive story. This recommendation includes the following components:

Short-term:

- Develop new wayside exhibits, battlefield route directional signs and a new HFC produced Unigrad brochure to increase visitor understanding of key park features along the tour route.
- Request HFC to create a project specific development team to work collaboratively on the development of these new interpretive products; it is critical that these products are developed and installed in tandem to meet the park's goal of having a new tour route.
- Collaborate with Eastern National, licensed battlefield tour guides and other park partners to insure that their products, services and visitor information messages reflect planned changes to the battlefield tour route.

Long-term:

- Develop a model site plan for one battlefield tour route stop; this includes the historic feature/s and the associated parking area. The purpose of a model site plan would be to coordinate battlefield landscape rehabilitation with placement of any visitor support facilities to be added to the parking lot or in the vicinity of the historic feature. It would be ideal if resource rehabilitation planning and future visitor facility planning could be conducted simultaneously as part of the same project. The model plan would guide future work at the other 14 battlefield tour features and the parking areas.

The model site plan would take a holistic look at the 2009 Vicksburg National Military Park Cultural Resource Landscape Report recommendations regarding resource interpretation, battlefield restoration, interpretation and visitor use for that specific area to develop a site design that protects resource features and supports the visitor experience through design. Specific design elements would include making the tour stop parking lot an attractive destination that invites use; establishment of a clearly defined path that brings visitors from the parking lot to the vicinity of the historic feature – inviting exploration; considers handicap accessibility requirements; and, determines placement of the interpretive wayside and/or other visitor facilities (benches and shade trees near the parking lot).

- **The Shirley House:** Is the only surviving residence that remains on the battlefield. The planning team confirms the park's proposal to use the interior of this historic structure for exhibits to interpret the civilian experience. In 2004, the NPS Design Advisory Board approved park plans to seek funding to restore the building. Future exhibits will focus on park themes that interpret the impact of the war, siege and reconstruction on civilians and the military use of the structure during the Civil War; these themes have direct ties to this site. In the short-term, site interpretation will improve through the addition of new interpretive wayside panels outlined in the Wayside Concept Proposal in Appendix D.
- **Old Visitor Center/Administrative Building:** The planning team assessment determined that the civilian story can best be interpreted elsewhere in the park, such as the Shirley House and Pemberton's Headquarters, and also recommends creation of a prominent and well designed sign that indicates the building is a non-historic structure, used for administrative purposes.
- **U.S.S. Cairo Outdoor Exhibit** includes the following recommendations

Short-term:

- Improve the arrival experience at the site parking lot. Provide an inviting and informative wayside that encourages exploration of the gunboat and museum. Many visitors believe there is an additional entrance fee to visit the *U.S.S. Cairo* Museum. Include in signage a summary of why the *U.S.S. Cairo* is significant and how this surviving gunboat connects to the struggle to control the Mississippi during the Civil War.
- Convert mounting for 23 small interpretive wayside panels into deck-mounted bases set in front of the safety railing in order to make these interpretive waysides accessible to all visitors.

Long-term:

- Seek funding to place this sole surviving original object in an enclosed structure, to insure its long-term preservation. While the original interpretive concept was a creative interpretive solution in its day, its current treatment is out of sync with NPS preservation and conservation policies.

- **U.S.S. Cairo Museum:** request HFC to provide two cost estimates for the museum:
  - A cost-estimate that addresses short-term exhibit improvements recommended for the *U.S.S. Cairo Museum*; and
  - A cost-estimate to replace the *U.S.S. Cairo Museum* exhibit in its entirety.
  - A comparison of these estimates will guide future decision making and help establish parkwide priorities based on exhibit requirements at Pemberton’s Headquarters and the VNMP Visitor Center. Once priorities are clear, and funding sources identified, HFC can help the park strategize an implementation plan. Within the timeframe of this LRIP, the current exhibit will be 30+ years old and nearing the end of its useful lifetime. Periodic updates could extend this life, but ideally a new exhibit installation should be planned for the museum. New exhibits would take advantage of modern technology, better address current park themes, and reflect new accessibility and interpretive standards. This plan includes both short and long-term recommendations.
- **Vicksburg National Cemetery:** Improve visitor understanding of this deeply evocative site through a planned visitor experience that includes the placement of interpretive waysides. Recommended waysides will discuss the history of the national cemetery and highlight important and largely unknown site elements such as: the cemetery includes the largest contingent of “United States Colored Troops” buried in the national cemetery system; and, following the Civil War, many newly emancipated residents celebrated the Fourth of July in Vicksburg National Cemetery with a commemorative reading of the Emancipation Proclamation. Currently the cemetery is an untapped interpretive resource.
- **Pemberton’s Headquarters:** open as a 7-day operation as requisite funding occurs for personal services. In the interim focus on:
  - Site repairs and maintenance; develop visitor support facilities such as parking, handicap access and wayfinding;
  - Collaborate with HFC to develop professionally produced exhibits for the historic house;
  - Complete staff hiring and training; and
  - Continue efforts to maintain local interest, goodwill and community access by opening the site on a temporary basis for special programs and events.

## The Planning Process

The goal of the interpretive planning process is not the creation of a plan. The ultimate goal is the development of a cost-effective, tightly focused, high quality park interpretive program that effectively addresses management goals and identifies the most important concepts to convey to park visitors.

This Long-Range Interpretive Plan (LRIP) recommends actions that should occur over the next 8 - 10 years. It identifies park themes, describes visitor experience goals, and recommends a wide array of interpretive services, media, programs, and outreach activities to communicate the park's mission, significance, themes, and values. It will join the park-produced Annual Interpretive Plan and Interpretive Database to make up the Comprehensive Interpretive Plan (CIP) for VNMP.

Barring legislative changes or major new research, the planning foundation expressed in this LRIP – purpose, significance, themes, and visitor experience goals – will remain constant over the life of this plan. Specific recommendations about media and programs may require updating as staffing, funding, technology, new research discoveries or resource conditions change. Further design documents will need to be prepared to implement some of the goals and recommendations in this plan.

# FOUNDATION FOR PLANNING

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## Background for Planning

The National Park Service Organic Act of 1916 states that the purpose of the National Park Service (NPS) is to “to conserve the scenery and the natural and historic objects and the wild life therein and to provide for the enjoyment of the same in such manner and by such means as will leave them unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations.”

*The National Park Service Mission is to preserve unimpaired natural and cultural resources and values of the national park system for the enjoyment, education and inspiration of this and future generations. The Park Service cooperates with partners to extend the benefits of natural and cultural resource conservation and outdoor recreation throughout this country and the world. -NPS Mission Statement*

## Vicksburg National Military Park Mission

Through the preservation and interpretation of its cultural, natural, and historical resources, VNMP employees and its partners provide opportunities for people to connect to this piece of history, enhancing their learning and personal experiences.



Park Entrance Sign

## Park Purpose and Significance Statements

Planning focuses first on why a park was established and what conditions should exist there before delving into details about specific actions.

Park purpose statements are based on park legislation and legislative history, other special designations, and National Park Service policies. Purpose statements provide the foundation for park management and use and guide the development of the interpretive program.

Park significance statements capture the essence of the park's importance to the nation's cultural and natural heritage. Significance statements do not inventory park resources; rather they describe the park's distinctiveness and help to place the park within its regional, national, and international contexts. These statements are the source for park themes and are used to define a park's visitor experience goals and interpretive program -- including personal services, interpretive media, and partnerships that support the delivery of the interpretive program.

### Vicksburg National Military Park Purpose

Congress established VNMP on February 21, 1899, "to commemorate the campaign and siege and defense of Vicksburg, and to preserve the history of the battles and operations of the siege and defense on the ground where they were fought and were carried on..."

In July 1862, Congress enacted legislation through an Omnibus Act, initiating the establishment of national cemeteries, "for the burial of deceased soldiers and sailors" ...which included Vicksburg National Cemetery.

On September 17, 1990, Congress further directed the Secretary of the Interior to "interpret the campaign and siege of Vicksburg from April 1862 to July 4, 1863, and the history of Vicksburg under Union occupation during the Civil War and Reconstruction."

## Vicksburg National Military Park Significance Statements

- Vicksburg’s topography reveals unique features of steep ridges and ravines, loess terrain, and 200-foot bluffs, located on an oxbow of the Mississippi River. Though the river’s course has changed, many of the land attributes and those of the overall Vicksburg campaign landscape persist today, identifying the area as a focus for settlement and a point from which to control the river.
- Control of the Mississippi River which supported and enhanced commerce throughout the nation and facilitated transport of essential military supplies was a strategic objective of both armies and defined the Western Campaign of the Civil War. Simultaneous Union victories at Vicksburg and Gettysburg in July 1863 marked a decisive turning point in the Civil War.
- Vicksburg’s crossroads of river, rail, and highway combined with imposing defenses and a critical strategic objective, produced one of the most complex and protracted engagements of the Civil War involving joint operations between the Army and Navy, overland and over-water troop movement, and diversion, siege, and defense tactics.
- Accomplishments of the U.S. Colored Troops in the Vicksburg Campaign proved their resolve and ability to effectively fight, which resulted in an ensuing surge of enlistment and respect for their contributions.



J. MACK MOORE COLLECTION, MISSISSIPPI STATE DEPARTMENT OF ARCHIVES AND HISTORY, JACKSON, MS (RECORD GROUP VOL. 16, FOLDER 4)

Vicksburg Military Cemetery, c. 1905

- Following the siege of Vicksburg, the Union garrison that remained used Vicksburg as a base of operations for raids, expeditions, commerce, and communication that assisted Union operations for the remainder of the war.
- The *U.S.S. Cairo* is the only surviving city-class gunboat constructed using the most advanced technology of the era, including steam propulsion, ironclad armor, and shallow-draft design. This technology changed the strategy and tactics of naval warfare on western rivers and was essential to the Union fleet which aided in securing control of the Mississippi River.
- Vicksburg's society was transformed by war, enduring changes that ranged from deprivation and destruction of a prosperous community to liberation of formerly enslaved people.
- Reconstruction efforts following the war were reflected in changes occurring in regional and national politics, economies, and society as a whole. Vicksburg became a microcosm of these changes and consequences.
- The monuments at Vicksburg comprise one of the largest collections of significant outdoor art in the state and one of the most extensive in the world. Representing the states involved and through their intricate symbolism, they commemorate the campaign, siege, and defense of Vicksburg. Commemoration continues today as a result of national reunification.
- Vicksburg National Cemetery honors service men and women of several wars by properly caring for their remains. It contains the most Union Civil War soldiers' graves in the country including many of U.S. Colored Troops and those of unknown soldiers. The cemetery provides opportunities for personal connections with those who died during events that have shaped the present-day nation.
- VNMP is one of the first five national military parks established through the steadfast efforts of Union and Confederate veterans who experienced war firsthand over its grounds. It preserves a memorial owed to faithful soldiers and sailors, and perpetuates their history as permanent object lessons for the benefit of present and future generations, both nationally and internationally.
- As a piece of public domain, VNMP, with its natural, cultural, and historical resources, today plays a vital role in our nation's heritage and provides a place of peace, reflection, enjoyment, and community engagement.

## Interpretive Themes

Primary interpretive themes are those ideas or concepts that every visitor should understand. They are the key ideas through which the park's nationally significant resource meanings and values are conveyed to the public. These themes provide the foundation for planned park experiences including interpretive programs, interpretive media and partnerships that support the delivery of the interpretive program. The themes do not include everything interpreted at the park, but rather the ideas that are critical to a visitor's understanding of the park's significance. All interpretive efforts should relate to one or more of the themes and each theme should be addressed in the overall interpretive program.

VNMP invites all visitors to explore the park and become immersed in its multi-faceted history from the American Civil War through the Reconstruction Era. Through this direct and personal experience, visitors will have opportunities to make personal connections to the park -- its resources and their inherent meanings; develop an understanding and appreciation for the difficult moments our Nation and its citizens have endured; and, discover why this national park is important to 21<sup>st</sup> century Americans and the international community. VNMP themes are listed below; the themes are numbered for easy reference.

### Overall Interpretive Theme

The Vicksburg campaign and subsequent period of Union occupation through Reconstruction reveal complexities in executing a war and rebuilding a community.

### Primary Interpretive Themes

#### The Military Experience: Strategy, Tactics, Technology and Humanity

- The Vicksburg campaign encompassed a complex and coordinated regional effort to control the Mississippi River. Success at Vicksburg achieved the Union's major objective of splitting the Confederacy in two and encircling it. In addition, the Union's simultaneous victories in Vicksburg, Mississippi and Gettysburg, Pennsylvania signaled the turning point of the American Civil War.

#### Sub-themes:

- The Anaconda Plan is attributed to General Winfield Scott, who proposed the strangling of the Confederacy by isolating it from its external markets and sources of war material. The ensuing blockade of the southern coasts and mastery of the Mississippi River culminated in the surrender of Vicksburg on July 4, 1863 and Port Hudson, Louisiana on July 9, 1863.

- Pemberton's Headquarters provides a glimpse into the workings of a Confederate Headquarters where strategies were developed and decisions made, including the decision to surrender Vicksburg on July 3, 1863.
- The July 4, 1863, surrender of Vicksburg resulted in significant losses for the Confederacy including the surrender of 30,000 Confederate defenders; the loss of 11% of Confederate artillery assets; and, coupled with the fall of Port Hudson five days later, the loss of immediate access to logistical support (manpower and supplies) from Texas, Louisiana, and Arkansas, due to the Union gaining complete control of the Mississippi River.
- The accomplishments of the U.S. Colored Troops (USCT) during the Vicksburg Campaign at Port Hudson and Milliken's Bend demonstrated the resolve and ability of former slaves and freedmen to fight for their freedom. The attention received by the actions of the USCT resulted in a surge of enlistments. Ironically, while these events were pivotal in demonstrating to Union politicians and soldiers alike that USCT were loyal and effective supporters and defenders of the Union, USCT soldiers experienced outright hostility and ill-will. Many Northern soldiers did not want to associate with USCT on terms of equality.
- On both the national and local level, the utilization of the United States Colored Troops (USCT) during the Vicksburg campaign had a major influence on prisoner of war policy and prisoners of war (POWs), through the termination of the parole and trade system practiced by the Union and Confederate Armies. This change would have far reaching impacts. USCT and their white officers were not given the same treatment accorded white POW soldiers surrendering to Confederate forces. The enlisted USCT soldiers were classified as slaves in rebellion, and if not killed outright, they were placed back into bondage. Surviving evidence indicates that some USCT officers were shot, some sent to a POW camp. Deprivation and suffering was commonplace in all POW camps - neither side could adequately maintain enough foodstuffs to support the military, civilians and prisoners of war.
- The Vicksburg campaign is the culminating point in a series of campaigns that linked political, strategic, operational, and the tactical art of war. It is used as a model for present-day military operations and studies, including Operation Desert Storm.
- The Vicksburg campaign occurred during a period of significant evolutionary advances in technology, resulting in major changes in the conduct of war.

### Sub-Themes:

- Naval aspects of the campaign equaled those of the army and demonstrated ingenuity and innovation. The Union planned to use the *U.S.S. Cairo* to assist with the Vicksburg siege. However, advanced technology intervened, and the gunboat was sunk by a new device – an underwater mine. A casualty of war, the *U.S.S. Cairo* stayed on the muddy bottom of the Yazoo River from 1862 until its salvage and raising in 1964.
- Preservation of the *U.S.S. Cairo* has given the world an ‘accidental time capsule,’ providing countless artifacts and information on the gunboat and its crew.

### Siege and Fall of Vicksburg

- Civilians in Vicksburg endured a 47-day siege, an ordeal bringing out the fortitude and resilience of individuals to survive no matter the cost.

### Sub-Themes:

- The civilian population of urban Vicksburg endured two occupations:
  - While the 1862 arrival of Confederate troops to construct fortifications on Vicksburg’s river bluffs offered residents increased protection, their presence stretched community resources. Later, as the Union Army pressed closer to the City’s defenses, the Confederate Army commandeered homes to support the war effort.
  - Following the Confederate surrender on July 4, 1863, the Union Army occupied Vicksburg as a conquered city and military base of operations until 1865; and later as a Federal garrison town where troops enforced the government’s reconstruction laws, policies and social experiments until 1875.
- The Union Army and Navy continually bombarded Confederate military emplacements, supply depots, and headquarters within the city during the siege of Vicksburg. Seeking refuge, residents dug caves into the hills and ravines throughout the city, and took many items from their homes to give some semblance of comfort. Although few residents were killed during the siege, many city buildings were badly damaged or destroyed.

- During the siege, the fate of all residents was uncertain. Tension, anxiousness and apprehension permeated all levels of white Vicksburg society as the Union Army advanced closer to Vicksburg. Enslaved Vicksburgers quietly monitored the success of the Army with carefully concealed enthusiasm and hope that freedom was near. In some instances, historical records illustrate that some enslaved Vicksburgers risked everything to support Union Army efforts.
- The Vicksburg campaign was the catalyst for reshaping black/white relationships in the Mississippi Valley. For enslaved Vicksburgers, Confederate General Pemberton's surrender to Union General Grant on July 4, 1863 represented the realization of the Emancipation Proclamation; and, for all residents reconstruction began. President Lincoln's reconstruction policies were implemented by the occupying Union Army still at war.

### The Occupation of Vicksburg

- The military occupation of Vicksburg on July 4, 1863 and the emancipation of enslaved residents, unleashed a political battle over state sovereignty, civil rights, and the power of government to remake and police society; these struggles became iconic for the nation. The Union Army occupied Vicksburg from 1863-1875.

#### Sub-themes:

- During the Civil War, 30,000 refugees came to Vicksburg to seek the protection of the Union Army. General Grant requested Army Chaplain John Eaton, of the 27<sup>th</sup> Ohio Infantry to organize freedmen's camps and put 30,000 thousand black refugees back to work in Vicksburg. Eaton's pioneer efforts during the Civil War set the groundwork for the Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands (Freedmen's Bureau) at the war's end. The Bureau sought to improve the life of all wartime victims by setting up the first public schools in Vicksburg, negotiating written labor agreements between workers and plantation owners, and providing representation in court cases. The legacy of the Freedmen's Bureau in Vicksburg was mixed. In Vicksburg and throughout the South, the Freedmen's Bureau operated for five years following the Civil War.
- During Vicksburg's early period of occupation, gangs, lawlessness, and fear were part of the everyday life of Vicksburgers black and white. While Vicksburgers had experienced reconstruction first hand since July 4, 1863, the surrender at Appomattox, VA ended the Civil War and signaled a new phase for the Country. The re-establishment of Vicksburg's civilian government began on July 1, 1865; and a larger Union Army military presence would struggle to maintain an uneasy peace.

## Reconstruction Period

- From 1865 – 1875, the Union Army, other Federal agencies and the Vicksburg, Mississippi civilian government struggled to find solutions to re-establish social and economic order after war. Vicksburg, Mississippi provides insight into the challenges, changes and consequences faced by residents and public officials during this period of American history.

### Sub-themes:

- African Americans faced an unknown social environment that potentially offered new opportunities, but more frequently evidenced uncompromising racism. Some achievements include access to education, elected office, property, civil rights, and marriage. Vicksburg’s Court House records reflect many marriages, a legal institution previously forbidden by law. African American Vicksburgers also suffered setbacks through the loss of civil rights by vigilante groups and government representation. White residents confronted societal change as well; former slaves were now social equals.
- Outside the City of Vicksburg in the more rural sections of Warren County, the complexities of rebuilding agricultural with a new type of contractual labor system - “sharecropping” - was initiated by local planters, army officials and representatives of the Freedmen’s Bureau. Much of the workforce came from the camps in Vicksburg. Efforts to restart the local economy and provide a wage for the newly freed were fraught with challenges, misunderstanding, and hoaxes.
- Vicksburg’s Court House records, Emma Balfour’s journal – and other journals, diaries and letters written by residents, local newspapers and official US Army and Freedmen’s Bureau records clearly attest to a period of radical change and continuing crises. After four years of war, new opportunities for former slaves were pursued in an atmosphere of chaos, distrust and continued racial discrimination by some – in spite of the presence of US Army and the arrival of agencies legislated to bring about social and political change through Presidential and later Congressionally directed Reconstruction policies.
- Depending on one’s perspective, “it was the best of times; and it was the worst of times” in post-Civil War Vicksburg. The political career of Peter Crosby, a Union Army veteran and former slave, exemplifies both hope and tragedy amidst the deep post-Civil War tensions in Vicksburg. Peter Crosby was elected Sheriff in 1873 intensifying racial tensions. Challenges to Sheriff Crosby’s authority by vigilantes resulted in a race riot in December 1874 – a conflict that crossed the downtown area into the historic Civil War battlefield and beyond. Many were killed and numerous Vicksburgers were missing and unaccounted for. This tragedy deeply affected the community and the surrounding region.

- The occupation of Vicksburg by Federal troops enabled the formation of African American communities and the emergence of new social relationships in the region. During the reconstruction period, Vicksburg’s Court House records reveal the reunification of families formerly separated under slavery and numerous marriages performed. African American churches became a centerpiece in the lives of the newly freed and separate churches were established in the community.
- The withdrawal of Federal troops from Vicksburg in 1875 signaled the return of home rule; and, consequently a return to the repressive society known to African American Vicksburgers before the Civil War. For almost one hundred years, Southern Democrats held power until the Civil Rights Movement in the mid-1960’s set the stage for sweeping social and political change.

### Commemoration

- Vicksburg National Cemetery and the monuments within VNMP exhibit the commitment of a grateful nation and its effort to honor sacrifices of soldiers and sailors, whose devotion to duty and shared war-time experiences, transcend the boundaries of North and South, reflecting a Nation reunited.

### Sub-theme

- Immediately following the Civil War, even in death, equal treatment did not occur. Today, Vicksburg National Cemetery honors all Americans who have given their lives in the service of this Country.
  - Burials at Vicksburg National Cemetery (VNC) reflected the social and political issues triggering the Civil War. USCT Soldiers were buried in separate sections at Vicksburg National Cemetery; while Confederate soldiers (approximately 5,000 men) were buried in “Cedar Hill Cemetery”, the City’s cemetery, located in another section of Vicksburg, MS.
  - Depending on the era, national days of honor such as Memorial/ Decoration Day, Fourth of July and Veterans Day were sometimes opened to all and at other times segregated. During WWII the National Park Service adopted a policy of segregated services for the families honoring soldiers buried in Vicksburg National Cemetery; this practice was discontinued late in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

- Following the Civil War, Vicksburgers of African American descent conducted some of their first public gatherings in Vicksburg National Cemetery. Their events were largely ignored by other residents, as the gatherings were held in a cemetery honoring 17,000 Union war dead (soldiers and sailors) – including United States Colored Troop soldiers. These Vicksburgers’ celebrated their freedom and freedom of speech by reading the Emancipation Proclamation; and, in so doing honored all who gave their lives for freedom and equality.

### Stewardship: ‘Transforming the Environment’

- Today VNMP and Vicksburg National Cemetery are layered landscapes with historically significant features and commemorative elements from the 19<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup> century. Guided by National Park Service policies, ongoing research, and new preservation methods and techniques, this landscape brings together the complexities of interpreting ongoing preservation efforts and the experiences of soldiers and residents during the campaign, siege, and occupation of Vicksburg, MS.



Visitors at Battery DeGolyer

## Visitor Experience Goals

Visitor experience goals describe what opportunities for physical, intellectual, and emotional experiences should be available for visitors to VNMP and Vicksburg National Cemetery (VNC). These experiences will be available to visitors of all abilities, including those with visual, auditory, mobility, or cognitive impairments.

### Visitors to Vicksburg National Military Park will have opportunities to:

- Drive through the battlefield and cemetery; locate a point of interest or person buried in the cemetery; if able, walk to that area; and make a personal connection to the purpose and significance of the park.
- Learn the mission of the VNMP, Vicksburg National Cemetery and the National Park Service; and, have the opportunity to become engaged in the preservation of the park through stewardship projects sponsored by the park, park partners and/or participate in Volunteer-In-Parks opportunities.
- Contemplate, relax, and enjoy park resources safely and without pressure.
- Have their necessary comfort needs met.
- Acquire information and material to help them learn about themes before, during and after their visit.
- Experience the park resources regardless of physical ability.
- Find their way around the park without the need for assistance.
- Interact with the park staff informally and formally in a way that respects their personal and civil rights and their expectation to receive courteous treatment and factual information.
- Have opportunities to acquire a more comprehensive understanding of the issues and impacts surrounding the Civil War and the experiences of soldiers and residents – enslaved and free in Vicksburg, MS during the Civil War and Reconstruction eras.
- Discover personal relevancy to this national park and the legacy it represents and preserves.

## EXISTING CONDITIONS

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### Visitor and Audience Profiles

The following is an overview of the typical individuals and groups that visit VNMP. This overview is not based on any formal study; it reflects observations and general anecdotal information provided by park staff.

- The average visitation for the park has ranged from 1,000,000 in the 1990's to roughly 800,000 in recent years. Recently, the unfortunate events of September 11, 2001 and Hurricane Katrina in 2005 coupled with higher fuel prices caused many people not to travel. Since the hurricane, many people have the mistaken impression that Vicksburg received massive damage from the storm. In addition, the lack of people traveling to and from the New Orleans has resulted in less traffic through Vicksburg. Guided tours dropped 18% in 2006. The largest example of this trend is the reduction of the number of Mississippi River boat tours groups that in the past have visited the park in higher numbers. With the ongoing recovery of New Orleans lifestyles and tourism, the park hopes for increased visitation in the coming years.
- The average visitor spends two to three hours in the park. The time breaks down to roughly 30 minutes in the main visitor center, 45 minutes at the *U.S.S. Cairo* museum, and 60 to 90 minutes on the park tour road.
- Over a year's period, the peak season for visitation is during the summer months from June until September. With the children out of school, many families choose to travel during this time. The slowest period for visitation is during the winter months – December to February. Like most parks, weekends are the busiest time each week.
- In general, visitors tend to be white, middle to upper class citizens with the vast majority coming from Mississippi and Louisiana with Texas running a close third. Overall, visitors travel from all fifty states and many foreign countries. The majority of international visitors are citizens of Great Britain and Germany.

**Adult Groups:** Adults visit the park throughout the year as part of tourism, church, and education groups. Most of the time, these type of groups, mostly bus caravans, are on a very structured schedule that does not allow them to be in the park more than an hour or two. Overall visitation from this population segment has dropped over recent years due to events outside the park’s control.

**Incidental Visitors:** VNMP receives a significant number of incidental visitors each year. A major interstate passes near the park. Conversations with visitors at the visitor center reveal that many interstate travelers did not originally include Vicksburg as part of their travel schedule. Most of the time, people will exit because of the large NPS park sign located on the interstate. Some visitors choose to stop because of the name recognition associated with Vicksburg. Others stop simply because it is a national park or they wish to have their “NPS Passport Book” stamped.

**Local Residents:** Local residents tend not to enter the visitor center on a regular basis; they will ride through the park when entertaining out-of-town guests. The peak season for this type of activity is during major holiday seasons. Most local residents come for recreation purposes only. Currently, the park is trying to make inroads into the Vicksburg African-American community desiring to increase their participation in the park’s interpretive program.

**Military Groups:** The park periodically hosts military “staff rides.” Groups of soldiers, generally ranging from fifteen to thirty groups per year, visit the park for extensive tours covering all aspects of the Vicksburg Campaign. Some groups are better prepared than others. Regardless, military groups generally spend the most time in the park. With current park staff shortages, conducting programs averaging in length from two to eight hours proves very difficult. Rangers assist in staff rides for roughly 1/3 of the military groups that visit Vicksburg.



Ranger with Visitors

**Subject Matter Enthusiasts:**

Although smaller in number as compared to other visitor categories, this select group visits in order to study and immerse themselves in the military aspects involving the Vicksburg Campaign. Generally, this type of visitor asks for more detailed information. In many instances, they also seek driving directions and orientation to the battlefields outside the park.

**School Groups:** Many school groups visit the park during the spring and fall seasons. The majority of students are from the State of Mississippi. State curriculum dictates that schools teach American and Mississippi History during the middle and high school years. Therefore, the median age of students visiting the park falls within this demographic.

**Scout Groups:** Scout groups from Mississippi, Louisiana, Arkansas, and Texas visit the park during prime camping weather in the spring and fall. These groups visit in order to utilize the scout hiking trails and therefore require little orientation besides providing maps and general directions. The Vicksburg Trails Commission administers the patch and medal awards.

**Virtual Visitors:** Virtual visitors utilize the park web site to gain information on visiting and historical questions. The web page allows the park to interpret to segments of the population that normally could not visit the park. Visitors can access a broad range of information on monuments, generals, troops, battles, and naval ships.

## Interpretive Facilities

VNMP consists of an 1800-acre battlefield park and five small units that are detached from the main park, including:

- Navy Circle, South Fort, and Louisiana Circle, are earthen fortifications on the Mississippi River bluff south of downtown Vicksburg near the river bridge.
- Grant's Canal, is located in Madison Parrish, LA, just across the Mississippi River Bridge from Vicksburg.
- Pemberton's Headquarters/Willis-Cowan House located in downtown Vicksburg. It is the park's most recent acquisition and is scheduled to open with a full visitor services program when operating funding is received.

The main battlefield park includes a 16-mile road tour of the battle lines and fortifications with 15 tour stops, over 1350 monuments and markers, wayside interpretive panels at five locations, the Shirley House -- an antebellum residence, Vicksburg National Cemetery, the restored Union gunboat *U.S.S. Cairo*, and two visitor facilities.

- The main visitor center, located at the park entrance, contains museum exhibits, a bookstore and gift shop, a 150-person theater, a park information desk, a tourist information desk, and restroom facilities.
- At the north end of the park, approximately eight miles from the park entrance, is an outdoor exhibit featuring the original *U.S.S. Cairo* gunboat. Adjacent to the restored gunboat is the *U.S.S. Cairo* Museum. The museum offers exhibits containing many of the artifacts recovered from the *U.S.S. Cairo* as well as exhibits depicting the gunboat recovery operations, and also contains a small bookstore, an information desk and restroom facilities.



Park Visitor Center

## Main Visitor Center

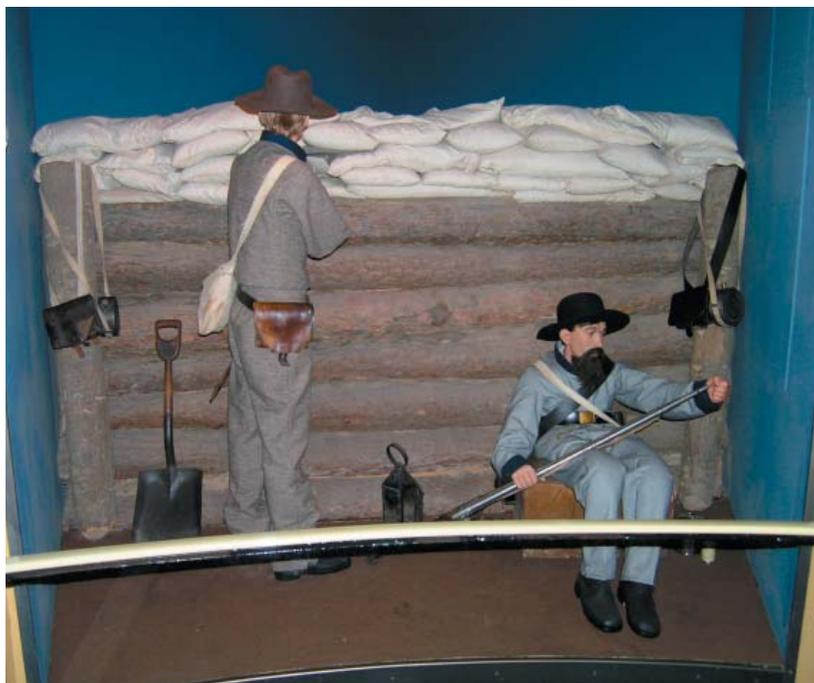
The park's main visitor center opened in the early 1970's, and contains a book store administered by Eastern National, a theater, and a small circular exhibit area containing five vignettes. A large circular desk is located in the center of the main floor from which rangers disseminate information. The lower floor contains offices and a break room. The present size of the staff has outgrown the available office space within the visitor center. Personnel are packed into the available space as tightly as possible with absolutely no space for growth. Enlargement of the visitor center would alleviate this problem, but other options include moving some personnel to Pemberton's Headquarters or to the recently renovated "Old Administration Building" to alleviate overcrowding. Although presently adequate, visitation will exceed parking lot capacity within the next five years.

## Visitor Center Exhibits

The current exhibit area incorporates four dioramas from the 1970's era and one new diorama featuring the role of U.S. Colored Troops at the battle of Milliken's Bend. The exhibits are arranged in a circular fashion.

The dioramas portray:

- "Trench Life" and features two Confederate soldiers firing behind earthworks;
- The second diorama highlights hospital conditions during the siege. The existing diorama contains various equipment used in a hospital setting including a stretcher, bottles, and an amputation kit.
- The third diorama interprets daily life for soldiers in the field. The diorama features an officer's tent complete with field desk and other camp equipment.
- The fourth and newest diorama features the role of African-American troops in the Vicksburg Campaign, particularly at the Battle of Milliken's Bend. A period photograph serves as the backdrop against the wall. In addition, two black Union soldier mannequins stand at the center of the exhibit.
- The fifth diorama discusses various aspects of cave life for Vicksburg's citizens during the siege. The present diorama features the interior of a cave complete with household goods such as a rocking chair, mirror, and shawl.



Trench Life

Recent exhibit improvements include:

- Updated dioramas featuring five interpretive panels, one for each diorama, to the front of each display to enhance the interpretation.
- A fiber-optic electronic map providing an overview of the complex troop maneuvers involved in the Vicksburg Campaign. Two interpretive panels flank the fiber-optic map which explain the struggle for Vicksburg and the occupation and reconstruction era of Vicksburg.
- An interpretive panel that addresses the causes of the Civil War; it is located near the entrance to the exhibit area.

#### Analysis of future needs:

The Vicksburg Campaign, battle, and siege along with the events of the war's aftermath provide rich material for interpretive exhibits. With its multiple existing and planned exhibit venues, the park presents excellent opportunities to connect visitors to its resources and stories. The greatest challenge may be in editing the wealth of material available into a limited number of concise, focused presentations that respect visitors' valuable time in the park and the diverse interests that they bring.

Visitors are likely to spend much of their time in the park exploring the many significant locations along the tour road. Exhibits are an important compliment to the park experience, but with potential exhibits in the visitor center, a museum, and two historic houses, obviously there will be much more to do and see than time allows.

A typical visitor may spend 2 ½ to 3 hours in the park, but how they spend those hours may vary considerably. All of the park's interpretive media should work together to support these individual experiences. Some visitors, school groups, and families passing through on vacation may have an elementary understanding of Civil War history. For these people, exhibits should provide basic overviews that quickly communicate the "big ideas" established by the park's interpretive themes, using language that is understandable to a general audience. Others with greater



A new fiber optic map orients visitors to the Vicksburg Campaign.

knowledge, specific interests, or who have a personal connection through their family history may come to personally experience aspects of the park in detail to discover new insights. Exhibits should also include a layer of in-depth interpretation and information to satisfy those with specific interests.

The desirability of layered information targeted to those with different interests and levels of knowledge requires carefully organized and designed exhibits that encourage viewers to explore and discover the content that is relevant and meaningful to them.

Primary uses of the visitor center include rest rooms (exterior to the main space), lobby, bookstore, auditorium, and exhibit space. As currently organized, the interior space is not being efficiently used. Most of the main interior space is devoted to the bookstore. A very large information and sales desk dominates the center of the space. Separate rooms are located on opposite sides of the lobby/sales area, one serving as an auditorium, the other as an exhibit room. A smaller, separate desk is positioned in the entry vestibule for the Vicksburg Convention and Visitor's Bureau.

There are several problems with this arrangement. Entering the enclosed vestibule, visitors first encounter the Vicksburg Convention and Visitor Bureau (VCVB) desk, not the NPS staffed information desk. The main interior space resembles a store rather than a visitor center. The auditorium entrance is hidden at the far end of the VC from the building entrance and visitors must walk through the bookstore to reach it. The exhibit room is also partially obscured, and the space is relatively small.

Recent changes to the visitor center include the addition of the VCVB desk in the enclosed vestibule, installation of a fiber optic battle map in the exhibit room. Planned changes include a new park film for the auditorium. Each of these has had, or will have an impact on the effective use of the interior space.

The cooperating association's redesign of the bookstore provides an opportunity to eliminate some of the existing clutter and to better distinguish the sales area from lobby, orientation, and interpretive spaces.

### **Visitor Center Orientation Film**

The current eighteen-minute film titled "In Memory of Men" dates from the early 1970s and gives the visitor an overview of the Vicksburg Campaign. Unfortunately, the film has aged and the footage, graphics, and interpretive themes are not engaging to a modern day audience. Funding has recently become available to prepare a new orientation film; at this writing film production is underway.

## Pemberton's Headquarters

This dwelling is the former home of the Cowan/Willis family. During the siege, Confederate Lt. General John C. Pemberton made his headquarters at this location. Here, on the first floor of the house, Pemberton made the decision to surrender after holding a council with his officers.

### Analysis of future needs:

In 2004, the National Park Service's Southeast Region Cultural Resource unit completed a Historic Structure Report that detailed the history and architecture of the site. In this report, the park's preferred alternative outlined a decision to keep the present structure intact, including post-Civil War additions. During the planning process for the Historic Structures Report, public input relative to preliminary interpretive alternatives was solicited by the park and recommendations from citizens were obtained at a public meeting.

## Shirley House

During the siege, the Shirley House (or "White House") became a landmark to Confederate and Union troops. Today the house is the only Civil War period dwelling left on park grounds. Long years of neglect have left the structure in significant disrepair. Restoration has begun and will be completed as the needed funds become available. Obtaining funding for restoration of the historic house is the most pressing need at this time.



Use of the Shirley House for interpretive exhibits will follow building repair and restoration.



PHOTO CREDIT: J. MACK MOORE COLLECTION, OLD COURT HOUSE MUSEUM, VICKSBURG, MS

General Pemberton's Headquarters

## The U.S.S. Cairo Outdoor Exhibit

VNMP contains the only remaining City Class ironclad from the Civil War era. This type of ironclad weighed over 880 tons but only drew six feet of water. Therefore, the ironclad's design proved very conducive to navigating shallow inland waters, and this type of vessel was a key element in the Union Navy's attempts to gain control of the Mississippi River. The original gunboat is protected beneath a large "all-weather" canopy tent and supported by equipment to preserve and maintain specific environmental requirements.

The gunboat has interpretive pathways around the boat and crossing its deck. Along the pathways, interpretive panels discuss various aspects of the boat such as life aboard the vessel, engines, paddle wheels, armor, cannons, pilot house, and the torpedo design that was used to sink the *U.S.S. Cairo*. Although the interpretive panels date from the mid 1980s they are accurate but not accessible to wheelchair users.

## Analysis of future needs:

The living history program presented at the main visitor's center has proven very popular with visitors, and a similar program at the *U.S.S. Cairo* would generate additional interest and provide yet another means of interpreting the sailors' life on a gunboat.

## U.S.S. Cairo Museum

Visitors entering the museum are directed into a small room that depicts the history and campaigns surrounding the City Class ironclads (so called because of their thick iron armor plating and their being named for cities along the Ohio and Upper Mississippi Rivers. The main exhibit room displays artifacts recovered from the wreckage of the *U.S.S. Cairo*. Visitors walk along the edge of the main room and peer over the railing at various artifact displays.



A casualty of war, the USS Cairo was raised from the Mississippi River in 1964 by the NPS.

## Exhibits

### Analysis of future needs:

Within the timeframe of this LRIP, the current exhibit will be 30+ years old and nearing the end of its useful lifetime. Periodic updates could extend this life, but ideally a new exhibit installation should be planned for the museum. New exhibits would take advantage of modern technology, better address current park themes, and reflect changing standards for interpretation and accessibility. The *U.S.S. Cairo* Museum was originally built to display a selection of objects salvaged with the ship. If new exhibits are planned for this space, they should continue to highlight and take advantage of this tremendous resource.

Broadly, exhibitions fall into one of two categories – story driven or object driven. Most NPS visitor center exhibits fall into the first category. Their primary purpose is interpretation of the park’s resources and significance. The story takes precedence, and objects are selected to support the interpretation. The current *U.S.S. Cairo* Museum is an example of the second category – object driven, similar to a traditional museum. In this case, the primary focus is on the objects. Other exhibit elements support this focus by interpreting the objects and putting them into context.

## Orientation Film at U.S.S. Cairo Museum

The film concentrates on the sinking and raising of the *U.S.S. Cairo*. Film footage from the excavation site serves as the backdrop for a narration on the various attempts to raise the gunboat. For information purposes, the film is fine. However, the narrator makes allusions to the coming opening of the museum. Another problem lies in the appearance of the film. The footage and diagrams are dated compared to today’s standards.

### Analysis of future needs:

A new orientation film is needed with interpretive themes that focus not only on the sinking and raising of the gunboat, but also the sailors and the overall role of the city class ironclads in the Civil War.

## Other Interpretive Media

### Publications

#### Park Brochure

Like most National Park Service brochures, the VNMP publication gives an overview of what the park offers. The reverse side contains a map of the park tour and text on each tour stop. The present map gives a good overview of the present and past courses of the Mississippi River. The narrative overview of the campaign is concise and comprehensive.

#### Analysis of future needs:

More inclusive information on civilian and African-American participation in the Vicksburg Campaign as well as reconstruction is needed.

#### Site Bulletins & Junior Ranger Booklets

Both sites, the visitor center and U.S.S. Museum, possess numerous site bulletins covering a variety of subjects and serve as one of the best interpretive tools for the staff. At this writing, the park received a “Junior Ranger Program Ambassador’s Grant”. This funding will provide a new park specific Junior Ranger booklet in the near future. All publications are composed and produced “in-house.”

Rack cards are located in front of the visitor center desk. Subjects include Pemberton’s Headquarters, Grant’s Canal, WebRanger, African-American History, The Shirley House, Exercise Programs, and the Federal Recreation Pass Programs.

#### Analysis of future needs:

While conforming to current NPS font and style, the present brochures need to be edited for clarity, universal themes, and overall content. Many sentences in the brochures contain passive verbs and run-on sentences.

The park should consider composing another Junior Ranger booklet for a higher age bracket. Many families have children across a wide age span and the booklet is not suitable for upper middle and high school students.

#### Publications for Purchase

The visitor center and U.S.S. Cairo Museum sell the official NPS Vicksburg handbook and Eastern National’s Civil War Series: Vicksburg. In addition, Eastern National offers several publications on the Vicksburg Campaign and on the Civil War in general including African-American, children’s, and women’s history.

Eastern National also offers multilingual brochures for purchase in German, French, and Japanese. The brochures are a translation of the older park tour brochure; the main difference being the lack of modern monumentation on the translated brochures. The bookstore does not sell multilingual brochures in any abundant quantity for two reasons: the bookstore does not advertise their availability and many world travelers can read basic English.

#### Analysis of future needs:

The park should explore a way to offer free multilingual brochures to the public.

## Signage

Although park signage is in good shape, a parkwide sign plan needs to be developed to combine and cut down on the number of signs in the park in order to improve visitor wayfinding throughout the battlefield while at the same time maintain the historic scene as much as possible.

## Wayside Exhibits and Outdoor Bulletin Boards

Wayside exhibits are currently on display at the living history area, tour stops # 2 and 3, Grant's Canal, and the surrender interview site. Outdoor bulletin boards are located in the parking lot of the visitor center and *U.S.S. Cairo* Museum. Currently, park staff designs the wayside exhibits.

Ameristar Casino may build a walking path along Washington Street highlighting the Naval Circle, South Fort, and Louisiana Circle areas. Interpretive wayside panels are planned for different points of the walking trail.

### Analysis of future needs:

The park should initiate a parkwide wayside exhibit planning effort to better address the needs of the park holistically.

## Website

VNMP's website features a picture of each monument, tablet, plaque, biographical information on the key participants, and an overview of not only the resource storyline but the history of the other attempts and battles to capture Vicksburg that preceded the siege.

### Analysis of future needs:

Inadequate staff time is spent on the website; more time needs to be devoted to improving the website.

Work with National Archives in Atlanta to provide easy access to documents related to the Vicksburg campaign, siege and reconstruction on the park website

## Personal Services

### Staffing for Interpretation and Visitor Services

A GS-12 Chief of Operations (“the Chief”) has oversight for the law enforcement, natural, cultural, and interpretive divisions. In addition, the Chief has responsibility for all government buildings, fee program, and curatorial artifacts. The GS-11 Supervisory Park Ranger manages the day to day scheduling and interpretive activities; and, supervises GS-09 Park Rangers, a GS-05 Park Guide and two to three summer seasonal rangers to assist with the living history program. Since FY07, the NPS Centennial Initiative has provided funding for six seasonal interpretive positions. This infusion of funds has enabled the park to expand the number of interpretive program offerings during the busy summer season.

### Programs for the General Public

The staff conducts interpretive programs mostly during the summer months and on special occasions. The *U.S.S. Cairo* Museum and Old Jackson Road area are the main sites for interpretive programs in the park.

### Programs by Appointment for School Groups

Park staff (the two GS-09 Rangers) conducts educational tours for school groups by request. March and September are the most common months requested. Educational programs are conducted at the *U.S.S. Cairo* site and the Old Jackson Road area. Programs are generally two hours in length.

Once or twice a year, park staff is able to present an in-depth five stop educational program for local 4<sup>th</sup> graders. After “enlisting” in the army, students “march” to the five stops that highlight medical practices, siege operations, rations,

and monumentation along with a resource message. The program is well received by teachers and received the Regional Tilden Award for excellence. However, this program is staff and logistically intense.

A large number of school groups visit the park. Most school groups choose not to participate in the educational programs offered by the park’s licensed guides. Almost 40% of the park’s Licensed Guide service is provided to school groups. This situation is unique to VNMP.

### Roving Interpretation

The interpretation staff does not conduct roving interpretation on a regular basis. During the summer months, from June through the first of August, park staff presents regular programs at the Illinois Monument roughly for two hours from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. When visitors fail to appear, roving interpretation occurs by default.

## Outreach Services

The interpretive staff conducts outreach services by delivering programs for local schools or civic groups. The park does not actively solicit outside programs. However, if a program is requested, the park will attempt to accommodate them.

## Special Events

Some of the large annual events that have occurred in the past include:

***Soldiers through the Ages:*** This event held on Memorial Day weekend, features reenactors portraying soldiers from the Revolution through current conflicts. In addition, a local collector displays a wide array of military vehicles.

***Soldiers Day:*** During the spring, the park conducts an extensive four-hour educational program for roughly 75 to 150 kids from local 4<sup>th</sup> grade classes. Students are immersed in the Civil War role of a soldier through an enlistment process, drilling, and period rations. The students then “march” to the different sites nearby where Rangers present information on monumentation, civilian life, and siege operations.

***Park Day:*** In April, local volunteers participate in the annual clean-up day in the park. The event is hosted in conjunction with the National Civil War Preservation Trust’s effort to clean and rehabilitate the nation’s battlefields.



Local 4th graders participate in the “Soldiers’ Day” school program.

***Run through History:*** In March, the park hosts a jogger and walker race. On average, 1,400 people of all ages participate in the event.

***Christmas Open House:*** The park hosts a small social event for local public relation purposes around the holiday time period.

***Biennial symposium:*** On odd years, the park presents a symposium concentrating on a specific theme or time period from the Vicksburg Campaign. Leading Civil War historians share their knowledge through a series of weekend lectures. Visitors are allowed an opportunity to interact and ask questions during the event.

## **Historic Weapons Program**

The Historic Weapons Program is the largest form of interpretation conducted by the park. Every summer, ten to twenty teenaged volunteers along with two seasonal employees conduct living history encampments five days a week during the summer. Programs are conducted at the recreated earthworks adjacent to the main visitor center and involve both rifle and cannon firings. Roughly 10,000 – 20,000 visitors view the programs over a two-month period. VNMP staff includes three certified historic weapons safety officers.

In addition, the park hosts an average of two or three reenactment groups per year inside the park grounds. For educational purposes, the groups conduct programs on the life of a Civil War soldier. In addition, artillery and small arms demonstrations are presented to the public. Visitors are allowed to intermingle and ask questions in the period camp at the event site.

## **Public Inquiries**

The staff routinely fulfills requests for information received via telephone, the internet, and mail. The staff person working at the visitor center desk usually fulfills simple requests for brochures and other basic information.

## Analysis of Future Interpretive Programming Needs:

### Staffing:

Current interpretive staffing levels are inadequate. The park has two facilities that require a staff member to open and operate – the visitor center, and the *U.S.S. Cairo* Museum. Pemberton’s Headquarters was acquired by the park in October 2002; additional staffing was not included in the legislation. The park is working to restore this historic site; and, the local community is very anxious for its opening. In addition, if legislation is passed to expand parklands to include Champion Hill and Port Gibson, as the park anticipates, a request for even more interpretive and administrative staffing requirements will be necessary. Limited staffing impacts the Chief of Operations, who continually works on the front-line, in order to keep sites open and operating. Lost time performing planning and supervisory duties affects other critical park functional areas of responsibility, internal deadlines to support park administrative operations, and a variety of project deadlines with contractors and partners. The Centennial Funding Initiative has significantly improved the park visitor experience with an expanded number of ranger-led program offerings; it is hoped that this level of funding continues beyond the Service’s 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2016.

Although school groups do utilize the park and its resources, this visitor segment is on the decline. Existing staff has little time to proactively engage teachers and work with them to ensure programming meets the needs of established curriculum standards. When park programming does not meet these needs, teachers are compelled to look elsewhere for learning experiences.

The park desires a rich collaborative experience with present and future partners. This goal is becoming increasingly difficult to accomplish because the staff is stretched so thin running a 7-day operation. There is very little staff time available to “prime the pump” to maintain effective relationships with partners; build stronger and more productive partner programs and projects; and recruit, train and supervise volunteers.

This LRIP proposes a significant amount of new interpretive media to address program deficiencies and incorporate new interpretive themes. In order to meet the existing operating budget, unless additional monies are received, the park will have very difficult choices to make, including: reduction of hours of operation at key park facilities; to defer or turn down much needed interpretive project money; or, a mixture of both alternatives. These choices seem out of step as the nation approaches the 150th anniversary of the Civil War and the park works to expand the quality and level of the interpretive program to address the 1990 congressional mandate to interpret the impact of the Vicksburg campaign, siege, occupation and Reconstruction.

## Programs:

- The park should move toward conducting more interpretive programs for the general public during the spring and fall weekends. Weather is more conducive to tours during this time. The park should also explore expanding the variety and type of programs to include different subject matter in a broader range of locations.
- School groups provide one of the greatest opportunities to expand education and interpretive services at VNMP. The park should develop a curriculum-based educational program to present to all groups; a program that incorporates curriculum-based themes for this audience. The program should be staffed by a person devoted exclusively to the program and to education outreach activities.
- Local heat and humidity is very intense during the summer time from roughly May until September. This environment makes roving interpretation extremely challenging. Some staff members feel that visitors are less inclined to get out of their cars, and opt to enjoy driving through the battlefield in an air-conditioned vehicle. The interpretive staff should consider experimenting with interpretive roves in the cooler months of the year.
- Develop better anchor events and develop partnerships outside park.

## Partnerships

Vicksburg National Military Park has a number of ongoing partnerships with institutions that support the park’s natural and cultural resource management and interpretive goals. Listed below are key interpretive partnerships.

### Eastern National Bookstores

Eastern National, a not-for-profit cooperating association, operates the bookstores in the main visitor center and *U.S.S. Cairo* Museum. Revenues generated through sales are donated back to the park. The majority of the donation account funds the annual living history program conducted by the park. Other uses include the funding of a biennial symposium on the Vicksburg Campaign and miscellaneous items needed by the division.

The main visitor center sales area is much larger than the *U.S.S. Cairo* sales area which translates into a larger volume of sales. In addition to the books mentioned above in the “Interpretive Media, Publications: For Purchase” section, the main bookstore offers other items such as pins postcards, prints, music, CD’s, videos.

The *U.S.S. Cairo* store specializes in naval topics such as river campaign histories, boat overviews and naval biographies.



Park bookstores offer a variety of theme related materials.

## Friends of Vicksburg National Military Park and Campaign

The Friends of Vicksburg National Military Park and Campaign is a 501 (c)(3) not-for-profit organization of volunteers that raises donations to help fund the maintenance of historic features related to the battle. The “Friends of Vicksburg” help preserve the tangible reminders of bravery and perseverance of soldiers, sailors, and citizens involved in the struggle for Vicksburg. President Abraham Lincoln referred to this campaign as the “key” to victory in the Civil War. The goal of “Friends of Vicksburg” is for visitors to the region to experience and understand the impact of the people and events that comprised the most strategic and decisive campaign on the Civil War. The first project that the “Friends of Vicksburg” has undertaken is to engage benefactors that will adopt sculptures, monuments, markers, and tablets to provide for their maintenance and preservation. For more information about the “Friends of Vicksburg”, visit [www.friendsofvicksburg.org](http://www.friendsofvicksburg.org).

## Licensed Battlefield Guide Program

According to Federal legislation, the park oversees a licensed battlefield guide program inside the park. Fourteen guides comprise the organization. Guides conduct two-hour tours through the park. Peak season for guide services is spring through fall. Visitors are made aware of the guide service through several different means.

- By “word of mouth” from people that have taken the tour then recommend the service to other people.
- Advertisement also plays a key role. The Vicksburg Convention and Visitor’s Bureau handles the booking of guides and advertises their service in their Vicksburg tourism booklet.
- Visitors entering the park are made aware of the service through park signage and conversations with park staff.

In 2006, the Licensed Battlefield Guide Program (LBG) conducted 945 tours. Families most frequently solicit tours; they accounted for 571 of the total tours in a year. School and bus groups make-up the remaining number of tours given by licensed guides.

Analysis of Future Needs: the guide force needs to expand both in members and types of tours. The median age of the LBG’s is currently high. The park plans to host recruitment seminars/training in the future . In order to expand tours, the park will expand the scope of interpretive tours to include the downtown area.

## Vicksburg Convention and Visitors Bureau

The Vicksburg Convention and Visitors Bureau (VCVB) is an agency that was created by the City of Vicksburg to promote tourism in the area. They have one of the industry's most skilled and knowledgeable teams, with expertise ranging from tourism, casino and hotel sales, graphic design, and operation of convention and visitors bureaus. The park has partnered with VCVB permitting their staff to work in the park's visitor center at a visitor contact station. VCVB staff promotes area attractions and answers questions related to the city. This partnership has reaped great benefits for the park and for VCVB; their web site is [www.vicksburgcvb.org](http://www.vicksburgcvb.org).

## Volunteers

Annually, volunteers (VIPs) on average give 4,000 hours of service. The interpretive division's main resources for VIPs are local junior high and high school students recruited for the summer living history program. The living history unit is active from the beginning of June until the first week of August – five days a week.

In 2006, the park began working with the Civil War Preservation Trust in an annual park day clean up.

One volunteer is employed in reading, analyzing, and recording a synopsis of Civil War letters and diaries retrieved from various archives. This volunteer works one day a week at the park.

The park plans to install RV sites for VIPs. The park hopes to retain volunteers for a longer period of time and therefore employ people in a broader range of roles.

## Issues and Influences

During the September 2007 workshop, the VNMP staff sought partner and stakeholder feedback through several discussions regarding specific areas affecting the delivery of the park's interpretive program and long range interpretive planning needs. The following text summarizes the issues discussed.

### Topic 1

The first interpretive priority at VNMP is to have a staff presence at the visitor center and the *U.S.S. Cairo* Museum. Current staffing levels, which the park does not anticipate changing, limit the park's ability to provide other interpretive services for the general public: including ranger provided roving interpretation, walks, talks, tours, special events, and curriculum based education programs. Presently, the park provides a limited number of NPS programs by reservation, and has only enough staff to keep facilities open.

The NPS has a long tradition of working with partners to accomplish its preservation and interpretive/educational mandates. Current Vicksburg park partners include volunteers, Eastern National which operates the park book stores, the Friends of Vicksburg National Military Park and Campaign, and licensed battlefield guides. Through use of park partner relationships and/or community resources continue to brainstorm ways to (1) connect with more visitors and (2) provide more in depth interpretive programming.

### Topic 2

Internal Vicksburg staff planning discussions for the development of this Long-Range Interpretive Plan highlighted that one of the most important long-range objectives to undertake with the interpretive program is "to work toward providing a stronger connection with Vicksburg residents of all ages and backgrounds." How can VNMP build stronger relationships with the local community?

### Topic 3

One of the biggest interpretive challenges faced by the park interpretive staff is that the anniversary of the siege and surrender at Vicksburg falls in July in Mississippi, during less than ideal weather-wise sightseeing conditions (very hot and humid!). Consequently, outdoor interpretive programs are not well attended because visitors opt to stay in their vehicles.

The park has tried many types of outdoor programs on many different topics and has come to the conclusion that the lack of attendance is weather related, not due to a lack of visitor interest. In response to this trend the park has developed interpretive media audio tour options such as the "GPS Ranger" and the cassette/CD tour. What other ideas or suggestions might VNMP pursue in order to provide in-depth interpretation?

## RECOMMENDATIONS

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The “Recommendations” section begins with parkwide recommendations followed by site specific recommendations. The following sections include:

### Parkwide Recommendations

- Principles Common to Interpretation
- The Pre-visit Experience
- On-Site VNMP Visitor Experience Recommendations
- Personal Services
- Partnerships

### Site Specific Experiences

- The Arrival Experience (includes fee collection)
- Visitor Center
- Battlefield Tour Route
- Shirley House
- Old Visitor Center/Administrative Building
- *U.S.S. Cairo* Gunboat and *U.S.S. Cairo* Museum
- Vicksburg National Cemetery
- Pemberton’s Headquarters

## Parkwide Recommendations

### Principles Common to Interpretation and Education Programming

The following principles will apply to all interpretation and education programming at VNMP:

- Interpretation and education programming will inform visitors they are viewing a changed landscape that does not fully reflect the 1863 battlefield appearance; explain the ongoing battlefield landscape rehabilitation program developed through the 2009 Cultural Landscape Report planning process; identify which areas are under rehabilitation and restoration and identify those that are not; and, wherever possible, future interpretive media will provide specific on-site interpretation so visitors can see and understand what happened here -- regardless of the existing forest of trees. Preservation and stewardship messages will be integrated into all programs and media.
- Education programming will reflect the curriculum standards of the state of Mississippi and nearby states. Whenever possible, curricular materials also will be developed in a manner to easily adapt the materials to other standards across the nation.
- All interpretation and education programming will address physical and programmatic accessibility.
- In order to bring the story alive for visitors, interpretation and education programming will use historic objects, period illustrations, and documented examples and quotes from historic figures that reflect the multiple points of view from participants during the historic periods interpreted.
- The park will implement Servicewide sign program standards as signage and interpretive media are upgraded.
- Interpretation and education programming will include multiple perspectives wherever applicable.
- Interpretation and education programming will incorporate the most current research.
- “Virtual visitors” will have opportunities to view key vistas and gain access to new research, studies, management plans, and historical information.

- The park will partner with neighboring institutions to develop programs, media, share research, etc. Park partners will be included early in the planning discussions for new projects affecting interpretation and visitors services, so partners understand what is going on, can assist the park early on, and bring other insights or information to the table.
- A variety of evaluations will be used to inform and/or verify staff observations of visitor interests and activities.
- The staff will be encouraged to continue to experiment with new thematic programming to reach its diverse visitors and address new park themes.

### Pre-Visit Experience

- Continue to provide park information by telephone, mail, and the internet. The staff will work with community leaders and park partners to market VNMP as a significant attraction in the region's developing heritage tourism program.
- Provide consistent up-to-date visitor trip planning information on the park website.
- Provide classroom teachers with background and preparatory materials in advance of class fieldtrips.
- Work with National Archives in Atlanta to provide easy access to documents related to the Vicksburg campaign, siege and reconstruction on the park website



Living history interpreters help visitors make connections to park history.

## On-Site VNMP Visitor Experience Recommendations

*“The Experience” is what visitors take from a park. Providing opportunities for visitors to interact with park resource in a manner that is both safe for visitors and leaves the resource un-impaired – what has been termed “visitor experience planning” is the core of park planning and development.*

- Dave Dame, former Servicewide Chief of Interpretive Planning

*Effective interpretive planning ensures that essential park values and experiences are accessible to visitors; and, that programs, facilities and media are designed to accomplish resource preservation goals and visitor use.*

- Planning for Interpretation and Visitor Experience

- Develop an interpretive hook to promote the park and establish relevancy, for example: “From Civil War to Civil Rights: Discover Vicksburg National Military Park”

New interpretive programs and media will reflect well documented historical voices that illustrate the struggles, challenges, successes and failures during the Vicksburg campaign, siege, occupation and Reconstruction. Interpretation will help to inform future visitors, as they seek to understand what happened, while visiting the park. The future measure of success for this interpretive approach is: 80% of park visitors understand how VNMP connects to their personal interests and life today.

- Work with tourism partners to promote and craft this type of message and corresponding community experiences.
- Help visitors plan their VNMP experience in recognition of their personal interests, the time they have available to see park features and Abraham Maslow’s hierarchy of needs – knowledge of where basic comfort needs can be obtained – rest rooms, food, water and relief from the outdoor elements in inclement weather.
  - Organize visitor opportunities thematically, with realistic time estimates to complete for each experience identified. Park themes can be grouped into four general categories: “The Military Experience”, “The Civilian Experience”, “The African-American Experience”, and “Commemoration”. Important park messages regarding preservation will be intertwined in all park programs and media.
  - Recommend in each thematic visitor planning guide that all visits start at the visitor center, where the park orientation film and exhibits provide a historical overview.

- Prioritize experiences based on what the park feels is most important for visitors to see based on the park resources that connect to a specific interpretive theme and identify the approximate time it will take to complete each experience. Providing this level of information will enable a visitor to plan their park experience based on their interest and time available.
- The future park recommended thematic visit should begin with a three hour block of time – since staff observations and visitor responses at the VC reflect an average 3 hour length of stay; and, outline what the full or best park/partner thematic experience entails.

For example: recommended park experiences that are listed by a thematic category may take 1.5 – 2 days to realistically accomplish the total experience. If a group has limited time to enjoy the park, the park has outlined the variety of potential experiences available and identified the most important park features with estimates of time needed to participate in these experiences. Visitors can make decisions about their current visit; choose to change their itineraries and/or decide to return and visit the park again.

- Don't worry that past visitor patterns indicate that “if people leave the park to have lunch in Vicksburg, they may not come back”. It is very possible visitors may not truly understand all that the park has to offer around other personal needs – such as the need to eat, or to give their children a temporary break from “knowing their history” at the local hotel swimming pool.

If the park:

- Acquaints visitors with the full range of park experiences;
- Acknowledges their independence to organize and enjoy their increasingly well documented rare amount of vacation/free time most Americans now have available; and,
- Describes the variety of resource rich interpretive experiences in the inviting NPS visitor service tradition and the noted Southern hospitable tradition.

This future visitor experience model can serve as a spring-board for many repeat visitors.

Remember, while every visitor is unique, what each visitor shares in common (although these characteristic also vary individually or by family group) is:

- limited time;
  - limited money (a decision regarding how much money they will spend on their vacation – or day out in the park.); and
  - limited absorption capacity for the park story – *no matter how interesting it is!*
- Utilize a multimedia approach to support the park’s thematic visitor experience planning guide:
- Post the description on the park website under “Plan Your Visit”.
  - Make it a topic for the park bulletin board at key entry locations/destinations.
  - Have a trip/visit planning exhibit in the visitor center – place it near the VC desk, so people can seek the advice of staff – yet far enough away that when there are crowds of people at the visitor center desk, those that want to plan their visit independently and get going, can.
  - Redesign the HFC Unigrid brochure to reflect this approach. Since this is the “free publication given” once the entrance fee is paid and it serves as the primary interpretive tool along the battlefield route, this publication should also let park visitors know what their options are – and continue to use it as a planning tool during their visit.

### Sample Vicksburg National Military Park Visitor Experience Opportunities:

This sample visitor experience planning guide recommends that visitors use the main entrance of the park off Clay Street, yet allows for visitor independence if visitors want to leave the park mid-visit to get some lunch in Vicksburg, and then return to complete their visit via the park entrance/exit gate at Fort Hill. The experience plan also provides for visitors who might be staying in downtown Vicksburg by indicating an alternate way to come into the park at Fort Hill.

In order to support this type of future experience, the recommended future wayfinding assessment and sign plan would need to address signing how to get to Pemberton's Headquarters from downtown Vicksburg and how to direct visitors to the Fort Hill entrance and the primary park entrance at Clay Street.

Please note: the following text is to serve as a model only. In the future, if this text is utilized it will require editing and updating to include staff tested time estimates for lengths of stay, and perhaps the addition of other points of interest. Use of this model text would also vary depending on the choice of interpretive media. Also after a year in place, the park may want to use visitor observation tracking or focus groups to see if the visitor experience time estimates need to be adjusted.

### Planning a visit to Vicksburg National Military Park:

“From Civil War to Civil Rights: Discover Vicksburg National Military Park”. There are many things to do at VNMP. We invite you to spend the day with us. Bring a picnic and have lunch in the picnic area along the north battlefield tour loop at the *U.S.S. Cairo* Picnic Area or along the south battlefield tour loop at the Second Texas Lunette Picnic Area. Or, if the weather is inclement, have lunch at one of the many restaurants in downtown Vicksburg, MS and be sure to visit Pemberton's Headquarters before returning to the park to complete your Vicksburg Battlefield experience. The park staff recommends starting your visit at the park visitor center where the park orientation film and exhibits provide a historical overview of the significance of the campaign, battle and siege of Vicksburg. The visitor center is located off of Clay Street, near the intersection of Clay St. and Interstate 20, exit 4B.

**If your time is limited, the staff recommends....**

**One hour:** start your visit at the visitor center (30 min.) and then drive along the south loop of the battlefield tour route (20 min.) where Confederate and Union siege lines are easily seen. Return to visitor center and exit at Clay Street.

**Two hours:** start your visit at the visitor center (30 min.) and then drive eight miles on Union Avenue. This is a 20-minute drive; however, if you stop to view fortifications or state monuments along the way, it takes longer. This route follows Union Army lines to the *U.S.S. Cairo* parking lot. Stop and explore the restored gunboat and *U.S.S. Cairo* Museum (1-hour) and visit the Vicksburg National Cemetery. Before leaving the park at the Fort Hill Gate, be sure to visit the Confederate Fort Hill battery where an impressive view of the former Mississippi River channel underscores the importance the Navy played in the Vicksburg Campaign and why both armies fought for its control. Exit the park on Fort Hill Drive, follow for one mile to downtown Vicksburg, MS and access points to all major highways.

**Three hours:** follow the suggested 2-hour visit route above. Then drive to downtown Vicksburg and visit Pemberton's Headquarters to gain insight into the operation of a military command post and discover the impact General Pemberton's surrender had on Vicksburg residents (1 hour – includes drive time).

**Or, if you're interested in....**

Military history, the civilian experience, the African-American experience, or viewing the commemorative state monuments and memorials, the staff has outlined four different park experiences based on these topics. Staff recommendations list all of the activities related to the topic and show what you can visit if you have 1 – 3 hours to enjoy the park – or more! Suggestions include the amount of time needed to get to a facility and reflect the easiest way to travel to these locations. If you have any questions, please stop by the visitor center or the *U.S.S. Cairo* Museum for assistance.

## Military History

In October 1862, Vicksburg became the focus of the Federal government's plan to gain control of the Mississippi River. For nine months Union forces fought to gain control of the heavily fortified City. Following key Union victories at Port Gibson, Raymond, Jackson, Champion Hill and Big Black River Bridge, Confederate troops retreated to Vicksburg on May 18, 1862, seeking their heavily entrenched positions. Parallel Union Army fortifications were placed opposite Confederate lines to launch a major offensive. Following a 47-day siege, General Pemberton surrendered to General Grant on July 4, 1863.

The July 4, 1863, surrender of Vicksburg resulted in significant losses for the Confederacy including the surrender of 30,000 Confederate defenders and the loss of 11% of Confederate artillery assets. Success at Vicksburg achieved the Union's major objective of splitting the Confederacy in two and encircling it. The Union's simultaneous victories

in Vicksburg, Mississippi and Gettysburg, Pennsylvania signaled the turning point of the American Civil War.

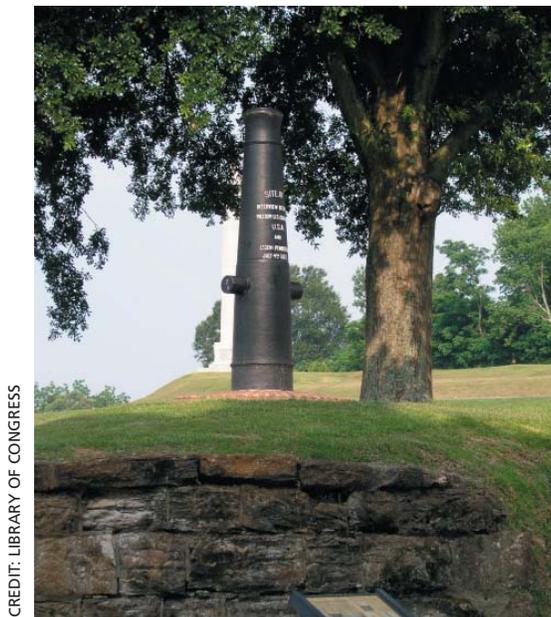
- Start at the visitor center, orientation film, exhibits, bookstore; 45 min.
- Follow the battlefield tour route along Union siege and Confederate defense lines-there are 15 stops located near key fortifications. We recommend parking your vehicle to explore these sites; interpretive waysides explain critical moments and introduce battlefield participants and issues.
  - Recommended taking the South Loop first; landscape rehabilitation has restored some historic views across Union and Confederate lines, 45 min.
  - Follow auto tour along Union Avenue to the *U.S.S. Cairo* – look for the surrender site along the way; 45 min.



Fort Hill anchored the northern flank of the Confederate lines.

- *U.S.S. Cairo* Outdoor Exhibit and Museum; explore the only surviving original city class ship, 1 hour
- Vicksburg National Cemetery, drive: 15 minutes; or leave your car at the *U.S.S. Cairo* Museum parking area and take a walking tour; 45 min
- Continue auto tour and follow Confederate Avenue and return to visitor center, 45 min
- Drive to downtown Vicksburg, MS to visit Pemberton’s Headquarters and learn more about Vicksburg’s siege, occupation and Reconstruction, 1 hour
- Visit “the circle parks”, the Confederate river batteries including Navy Circle, South Fort and Louisiana Circle, 45 min., on the way to . . .
- Grant’s Canal, in Madison Parish, Louisiana; round trip 1.5 hours back to downtown Vicksburg
- While in Vicksburg, MS visit Cedar Hill, where Vicksburg Campaign Confederate soldiers rest

Note, for the connoisseur: Approximately 595 commemorative iron tablets placed by Civil War veterans that fought at Vicksburg mark troop positions and trace field movements. Red tablets indicate Confederate positions and blue tablets note Union Army. Today, 21<sup>st</sup> century soldiers still use these tablets to understand the strategy and tactics employed at Vicksburg.



CREDIT: LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

Generals Grant and Pemberton met here on July 3, 1863 to discuss terms of surrender.

## The Civilian Experience

Civilians in Vicksburg endured a 47-day siege, an ordeal bringing out the fortitude and resilience of individuals to survive no matter the cost. The Union Army continually bombarded Confederate military emplacements, supply depots, and headquarters within the city during the siege of Vicksburg. Seeking refuge, residents dug caves into the hills and ravines throughout the city, and took many items from their homes to give some semblance of comfort.

During the siege, the fate of all residents was uncertain. Tension, anxiousness and apprehension permeated all levels of white Vicksburg society as the Union Army advanced closer to Vicksburg. Enslaved Vicksburgers quietly monitored the success of the Army with carefully concealed enthusiasm and hope that freedom was near. In some instances, historical records illustrate that some enslaved Vicksburgers risked everything to support Union Army efforts.

Following the Confederate surrender on July 3, 1863, the Union Army occupied Vicksburg as a conquered city and military base of operations until 1865; and later as a Federal garrison town where troops enforced the government's Reconstruction laws, policies and social experiments until 1875.

- Start at the visitor center, orientation film, exhibits, bookstore; 45 min.
- Visit Shirley House, the only Civil War-era structure remaining on the battlefield, 1 hour: Follow the auto tour on Union Avenue and proceed to the Shirley House. Continue following the tour road and turn left on Graveyard Road, turn left on Confederate Avenue follow to the park exit, 1 hour
- Drive to downtown Vicksburg, MS to visit Pemberton's Headquarters and learn more about Vicksburg's siege, occupation and Reconstruction, 1 hour
- Visit the Old Court House and Museum, 1hour
- Take a guided walking tour of historic Vicksburg, MS; seasonal- inquire at Pemberton's Headquarters (*to be developed*).



For 47 days, Vicksburgers sought refuge in hand dug caves during the bombardment of the city's fortifications.

## The African American Experience

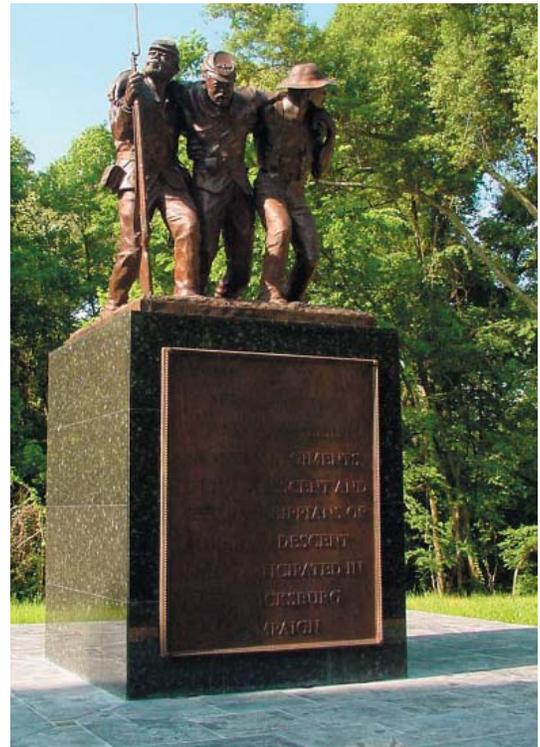
The accomplishments of the U.S. Colored Troops (USCT) during the Vicksburg Campaign at Port Hudson and Milliken's Bend demonstrated the resolve and ability of former slaves and freedmen to fight for their freedom. The attention received by the actions of the USCT resulted in a surge of enlistments.

During the Vicksburg siege, the fate of all residents was uncertain. Enslaved Vicksburgers quietly monitored the success of the Army with carefully concealed enthusiasm and hope that freedom was near. In some instances, historical records illustrate that some enslaved Vicksburgers risked everything to support Union Army efforts.

The Vicksburg campaign became the catalyst for reshaping black/white relationships in the Mississippi Valley. For enslaved Vicksburgers, Confederate General Pemberton's surrender to Union General Grant on July 4, 1863 represented the realization of the Emancipation Proclamation; and, for all residents Reconstruction began. President Lincoln's Reconstruction policies were implemented by the occupying Union Army still at war.

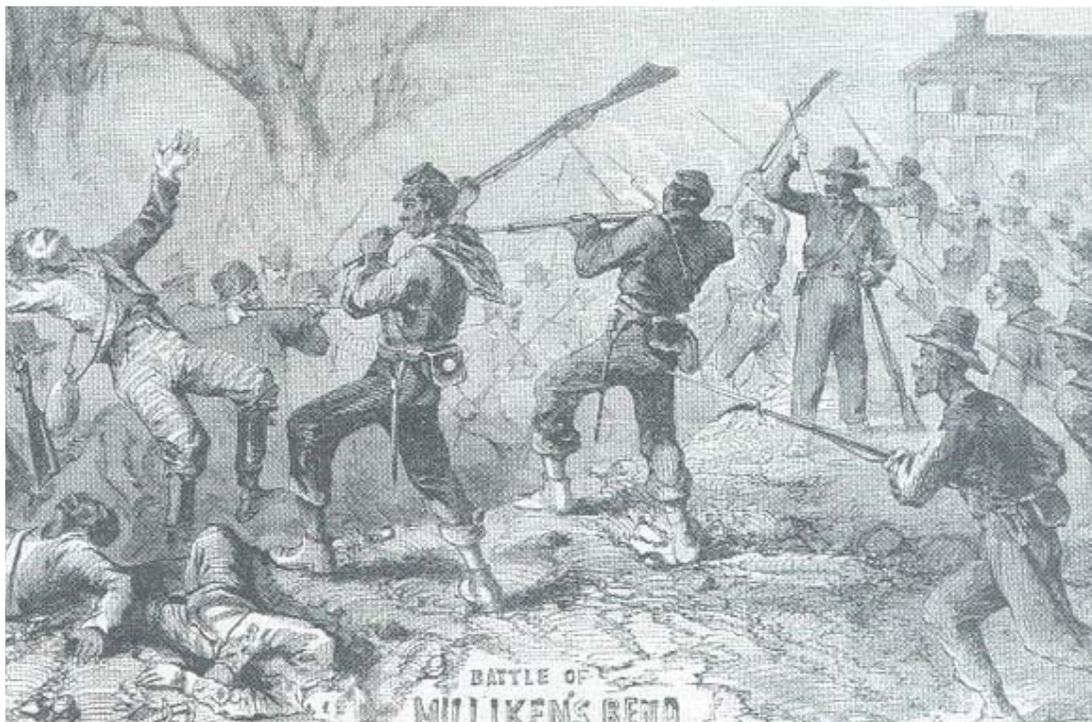
From 1865 – 1875, the Union Army, other Federal agencies and the Vicksburg, Mississippi civilian government struggled to find solutions to re-establish social and economic order after war. Vicksburg, Mississippi provides insight into the challenges, changes and consequences faced by residents and public officials during this period of American history.

- Start at the visitor center, orientation film, exhibits, bookstore; 45 min.
- Take the auto tour, if all sites listed below are visited, it will take 4 hours:
  - Follow Union Avenue north to visit African American Monument near Grant's Headquarters – watch for Grant Avenue; 45 min
  - Continue auto tour to *U.S.S. Cairo* Outdoor Exhibit and Museum; see only surviving original city class ship – where some African American's served, US Naval vessels were integrated, 1 hour



African American Monument

- Vicksburg National Cemetery, drive: 15 minutes; or leave your car at the *U.S.S. Cairo* Museum parking area and follow a walking tour; many “United States Colored Troop” (USCT) soldiers rest here, 45 min
- Follow Connecting Avenue to Confederate Avenue back to the visitor center – many enslaved Vicksburgers built Confederate defenses; 30 min
- Drive to downtown Vicksburg, MS to visit Pemberton’s Headquarters and learn more about the Vicksburger African American experience from slavery through emancipation, 1 hour
- Visit the Old Court House, site of many marriages of the newly freed and keeper of many records and testimonies regarding early African American court cases, 1 hour
- Take a guided walking tour of historic Vicksburg, MS; seasonal- inquire at Pemberton’s Headquarters, *(to be developed)*.
- Grant’s Canal, in Madison Parish, Louisiana; round trip 1.5 hours back to downtown Vicksburg. Battling malarial conditions, here conscripted slaves worked with Union soldiers to dig a canal, an unsuccessful attempt to bypass the Confederate batteries in 1862 and 1863.



Newly recruited Union Army “United States Colored Troops” valiantly defended their position at Milliken’s Bend.

## Commemoration: World Famous Outdoor Statues and Civil War Veterans Plaques

Today VNMP is one of the more densely monumented battlefields in the world and contains an extensive collection of historic structures including 661 monuments, 141 cannon and carriages, 594 cast iron tablets and position markers and 70 bronze castings -- mostly placed in the early 1900's by groups seeking to honor Union and Confederate veterans. This extensive collection of outdoor art features stone and bronze work created by some of the most renowned American sculptors of the era.

- Start at the visitor center, orientation film, exhibits, bookstore; 45 min.
- Follow the battlefield tour route along Union and Confederate siege lines--there are 15 stops located near key fortifications. Interpretive waysides explain critical moments and introduce battlefield participants and issues. Please note: the park map locates state monuments by a red triangle.
  - Recommended South Loop first; 45 min.
  - Follow along Union Avenue to the *U.S.S. Cairo* – look for the surrender site; 45min
  - Vicksburg National Cemetery, drive: 15 minutes; or leave your car at the *U.S.S. Cairo* Museum parking area and follow a walking tour; 45 min
  - Continue auto tour and follow along Confederate Avenue and return to visitor center, 45 min
  - Drive along South Confederate Avenue to view five state monuments (outside the park); this area is preserved by the City of Vicksburg. Please exercise care when exiting vehicles – this is a popular local commuting route, 1 hour

Please note: the following sections “Educational Tools Available” and “Hours of Operation, Access and Entrance Fee” should be provided with each visitor experience thematic category to help guide visitor decision-making and foster independence.

## Educational Tools Available:

- The park entrance fee includes all park facilities and the NPS Park Brochure that includes a park map that identifies points of interest and battlefield tour stops. Interpretive waysides explain critical moments and introduce battlefield participants and issues along the battlefield tour route.
- Upon arrival stop the visitor center to see if any special ranger-led programs or events are scheduled.
- Commemorative cast iron tablets placed by Union and Confederate veterans mark Vicksburg battlefield troop positions and trace field movements; red tablets indicate Confederate positions and blue tablets note Union Army. These tablets were placed the Congressionally authorized military commissions in the 1890's; however, during WWII more than 140 tablets were donated for the metal drive to support the Allied effort. Today, the park is working with partners to fundraise to restore missing tablets and maintain those that survive.

## Fee Interpretation

- Licensed Battlefield Guides, stop at the visitor center for more information.
- Available at Eastern National park bookstore: GPS electronic tour of battlefield for rent; auto tour compact disks, tapes, field guides and books available for purchase.

## Hours of Operation, Access and Entrance Fee

**Park Gates:** The park has two entrances – the Clay Street entrance, near Interstate 20, exit 4B is the main entrance near the visitor center. The Fort Hill entrance, near downtown Vicksburg, MS is accessed via Fort Hill Drive and Connecting Avenue; if your visit starts here, be sure to stop at the *U.S.S. Cairo* Museum, park staff can help you plan your park visit. Park gates open: October - March: 7:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.; April - September: 7:30 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.

**Visitor Center (Clay Street):** 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

***U.S.S. Cairo* Exhibit and Museum:** October — March: 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.; April — September: 9:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

**Vicksburg National Military Park is closed on the following Federal holidays:** Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day, and New Year's Day

### Entrance Fees:

Per Vehicle - \$8.00 (valid 7 days)  
Per Individual - \$4.00 (Pedestrian, biker, motorcycle, jogger, etc.)  
Bus Passenger/Church Van - \$4.00 per person

**For Educational Tours offered by Licensed Battlefield Guides - please call the park (601-636-0583)**

### Commercial Bus Fees

1-6 Person Capacity - \$25.00  
7-25 Person Capacity - \$40.00  
Over 25 Person Capacity - \$100.00

**Vicksburg Annual Pass - \$20.00 per year; valid for one year from date of purchase**

## Personal Services

Seek funding to restore VNMP interpretive staffing levels to the fully funded 2003 operating level, as described in the approved park organizational chart; and, provide additional funds to staff Pemberton's Headquarters – scheduled to open in 2010. Additional positions and funding required:

### VNMP (Visitor Center, fee booth and Cairo Museum):

- GS-9 Park Ranger, (established, unfunded position);
- GS-5 Park Guide, (established, unfunded position);
- Restore two weeks of funding for 3 positions and re-activate position descriptions to “full-time equivalent”. Background: In 2004, three positions -- a GS-9 park ranger position and two GS-5 park guide positions -- were re-described as subject-to-furlough, in order to meet the parkwide operating budget. At this writing the employees filling these positions are required to take a mandatory furlough for one pay period; totaling a loss of 240 hours of work-time from interpretation and visitor services.

### Pemberton's Headquarters:

- GS-9 Park Ranger, (established, unfunded position);
- GS-11 Education Specialist, (not established, unfunded position);
- GS-5 Park Guide, (established, unfunded position)

## Future Program Ideas

During the LRIP workshops historians, park staff and partners defined a robust future interpretive program. Many creative programming ideas were discussed. This document records these ideas.

- Establish earlier and later tours of duty and rotate among the GS-11 interpretive staff, in order to provide roving interpretation along the battlefield tour route -- when local visitors are using the park recreationally at the beginning and end of their work day. The park staff has noted that while many African Americans enjoy the park recreationally; they do not attend park programs. Informal interpretation -- being out in the resource and interacting with visitors may provide new opportunities to learn many things about this important audience. Future insights can be applied to the planning and delivery of the interpretive program.

Look at use patterns and have uniformed interpreters walk in different sections of the park daily -- or as much as possible, to talk with visitors enjoying the park, or just to be available for questions or assistance. This roving interpretive ranger should carry in a pack: water, 1st aid equipment, the park brochure, other interpretive items of interest, and a park radio. This measure is step one of the park's community outreach program; step two is the initiation of new thematic programs and media tied to the park's African-American story.

- Invite members of this audience to participate in a focus group to test future program ideas and learn about how their personal interests match park themes and related visitor experiences. Through the cooperating association, offer individuals who participate in this evaluation a small park specific memento of appreciation.
- Redesign the park’s anniversary program to coincide with the beginning of the Vicksburg Campaign, the beginning of the siege, or another appropriate date -- instead of the July 4 surrender. This change will put the event in a better weather season; and, since the park’s anniversary coincides with Gettysburg’s, a change in the date of Vicksburg’s commemoration may help to attract new re-enactment groups.
  - Develop indoor interpretive programs particularly during the heat of the summer; and, make the movie theater a dual use facility. Show movie every hour and have ranger talks on half hour.
  - Expand seminars/symposiums to include topics regarding African American history connected to the Vicksburg Campaign and Vicksburg National Cemetery, and topics related to new park themes concerning the Reconstruction era in Vicksburg, MS. In addition, expand cosponsored Eastern National author’s presentation/book signing interpretive events to include these topics as well.
  - Develop a special event program for the local community, for example a “Juneteenth” type of event on the Fourth of July – Independence Day for Vicksburgers of African American descent. Invite interested local Vicksburgers to participate with event planning.
  - Add to Living History Program a United States Colored Troop presence – recruit re-enactors.
  - Expand living history program to sites along the battlefield tour “south loop” where ongoing battlefield rehabilitation reflects a more accurate historic scene.
  - Convert current educational programs provided to student groups to curriculum-based education programs. Develop a specific program and materials for middle and high school students. Seek grants and or partners to support this educational outreach effort. Post materials developed on the park website so that any teacher that brings a group to the park could lead their students.
  - Expand Licensed Battlefield Guide Program responsibilities (LBG) to include the delivery of curriculum-based education programs for student groups that want a more in–depth park experience -- since Licensed Battlefield Guides are already serving 40% of student groups that come to the park. Consider starting this initiative with the park’s Freeman Tilden award winning elementary school program – since the park does not have the staff resources to carry out more than four times yearly.

Define specifically: how the park can support the program, from training through program delivery and evaluation? And, work to define a reasonable fee structure. One thought to consider, for every school program delivered by the licensed guides, set aside a percentage of profits to fund guide services for local schools that may not have the resources to pay for a program, but do have transportation available through the public school system.

- Develop tours customized for particular state that participated in the battle and tie sites to this type of interest. (personal services and/or media).
- Create cave exhibit with suitable space for a living history program; place next to the visitor center living military history program area. (The future cave exhibit might include an audio program, for use, when unstaffed.)
- Develop a walking tour (could be staff or media led):
  - from Pemberton's Headquarters through downtown Vicksburg
  - of Shirley House area
  - of the fortifications
  - of the cemetery
- Plan and conduct an active summer Junior Ranger program.
- Work with area Vicksburg Trails Commission to revise the trail and patch program to reflect new interpretive themes.
- Create annual walk to cemetery to commemorate "Decoration Day"/ Memorial Day and invite local partners to participate in event planning.
- Develop living history programs reflecting Reconstruction themes.

### Partnerships

#### Eastern National

- Continue to work with the Association to provide new educational materials that address park themes and reflect the diverse ages and interest levels of groups that visit. Materials should meet a variety of pocket-book/pricing levels.
- Work closely with the Association during the re-design of the bookshop interior to incorporate some of the circulation and signage needs outlined in the "Visitor Center Recommendations" section of this document.
- Work with Eastern National (EN) to revise the GPS ranger tour and other related sales materials connected with the battlefield tour route, in anticipation of the tour route changing.

### New Eastern National Projects

- Contact the Association and request that they collaborate with the park staff to replace the dated HFC produced Vicksburg Handbook. Unfortunately, during the recent HFC competitive sourcing review, the HFC-publications division was forced to eliminate from their product line the handbook series. In the past, the creation of the park handbook was a collaborative project between the park, the cooperating association and the Government Printing Office; HFC managed design and production of the handbook for the park.
- HFC staff can still provide limited technical assistance as a consultant for maps, graphics and fonts. In the future when the park is ready to proceed, HFC has the paper mechanical; this publication was never digitized. Note: recently, Eastern National has produced two impressive publications that follow the NPS handbook format: “Abraham Lincoln: A Living Legacy, and “The American Revolution”.
- When the HFC produced Unigrid/park folder is re-designed, ask the Association to fund the translation, layout and design and printing of this publication for the park’s most frequent foreign language visitor groups; and, develop a large print format available for visitors with visual impairments.
- Work with the park’s cooperating association to take Virginia DuBow’s ground breaking publication “Glimpses of the African American Experience” the next step. Request funding to have a social history historian review and update the publication and provide additional Vicksburg specific material. In addition, request the Association to provide assistance with professional editing.



A staff member welcomes visitors at the entrance to the battlefield tour route.

### Other Partner Projects and Program Ideas Discussed at Workshops

- Develop theme specific pre/post visit-pamphlets and post on park website on the following topics:
  - Vicksburg during the Reconstruction era
  - Explain how the environment of the park has changed.
  - Interpret the monuments i.e. as memorials and as works of art.
- Develop an interactive video-where visitors choose the outcome of Vicksburg specific events during the Civil War and Reconstruction eras; and then have the opportunity to learn what actually happened.
- Develop a downloadable audio/media program that includes the 1874 race riot testimonies.
- Mark and interpret sites of the race riot (3rd Louisiana Redan, off Cherry Street, at the Pemberton Monument, and on Grove Street Road)
- Use overlay maps to create an electronic landscape diorama to help visitors understand the changes made to the VNMP landscape over time.
- Create a Vicksburg campaign atlas.
- Work in partnership with City of Vicksburg to:
  - Develop a downtown tour route as part of the overall park experience with interpretive signs explaining a site's significance. Provide more in depth interpretation through either printed materials or audio guides. Include the following key sites in the community related to Vicksburg's Reconstruction history:
    - Mark building African Americans registered to vote in first post office (at Walnut and Crawford Streets)
    - Mark General Hawkin's headquarters.
    - Mark Freedman's Bank and develop Bureau exhibits.
    - The Old Court House
  - Commemorate the USCT with a levee mural along Vicksburg waterfront – a popular resident and tourist attraction.
- When staffing is available, provide uniformed rangers at City of Vicksburg's Welcome Center; proposed tour of duty would include guided tours to Navy Circle.
- Develop an interpretive partnership with the Historic Old Court House
- Contact Bethel A.M.E. church in Vicksburg to explore interpretive connections.

- Establish License Battlefield Guide tours that interpret the Reconstruction era
- Consider using volunteers at the visitor center, have rangers out in the park conducting interpretive roving or park programs.
- Organize press days/tourism industry days to promote tourism
- Work with local media to promote the park values and themes; some community groups and members have a sense that park is not interested in community involvement.
- Develop partnerships with local hotels. Provide rack cards for hotels guests; or tent cards for their dining areas. If area facilities have their own hotel channel, consider partnering to develop a short 1-2 minute promotional film clip that features the park. This future product could also be posted on the park’s website.
- Increase volunteer programs through recruiting and improve training and program supervision.
- Partner with casinos to get their help in promoting park attendance. Remember, both Generals Pemberton and Grant took several calculated risks during the campaign (gambled) – there might be some interesting interpretive/promotional activities.
- Partner with local library to promote reading programs related to history.

### Reach out to Academic Community to Support Development of New Themes

- Seek partnerships with universities for service learning credit hours through cooperative agreements. Negotiate for a specific number of hours outside the classroom, to be worked in the park by students in cooperation with the University. Students earn class credits for a specific number of hours given for a specific park project that meets park and university standards. Develop and prioritize potential project lists that meet these standards.
- Contact nearby Alcorn State University, Jackson State University, and Tugaloo College – use connection to research new themes related to African American history.
- Volunteers/Interns: identify future service learning projects and post job/project descriptions and requirements on website. Estimate academic skill level required; estimate project hours to accomplish; if appropriate specific time of year to work/complete project; and lead staff member to contact. Work with local universities and City of Vicksburg public school system to target this type of “academic/volunteer/community service related program. (Note: Vicksburg, MS high school students now have community service requirements.)

## Site Specific Recommendations

### Core Battlefield

### Arrival Experience

#### Short-term:

- Use new Servicewide Sign Standards when replacing lost or damaged signs. Consult with HFC Strategic Initiatives Office/Sign Program for technical assistance with standards, text, sign design and vendor sources.

#### Long-term:

- Seek funding to develop a wayfinding/sign master plan for the park. Contact HFC for assistance to develop a cost estimate that includes the development of (1) a wayfinding assessment and (2) a wayfinding master plan. **Note:** a future scope of work should include a request for a wayfinding assessment with options for the development of future sign/wayfinding master plan.
  - The wayfinding assessment will document all the signs in use and make recommendations for updating the signs to conform to the new National Park Service UniGuide Sign Standards.
- The master plan will recommend the specific signs needed that reflect new sign standards for Park and Facility Identity, Road Guide and Trailblazer Signs, new Visitor Information Signs, Regulatory Signs and include directional signs for the battlefield tour route. The master plan defines specifically: what signs are needed, where they should go, includes construction drawings and specifications, and a replacement/demolition plan. The master plan also addresses plausible methods for sign replacement based on funding criteria or park specific project needs. For example: while the park may seek PMIS funding to replace parkwide signs in one project year, the master plan could also address replacement of signs based upon the availability of cyclic sign replacement funds. An example of future sign replacement coordinated with known program changes: signs for the future battlefield tour route could be planned, but funded and produced later when the park is ready to institute this change.
- Following the development of the master plan with prioritize sign replacement priorities and estimated costs, develop Project Management Information System (PMIS) funding requests to fabricate and install signs.

Note: HFC manages the Servicewide Sign Program. Servicewide planning needs have exceeded the capacity of HFC. The HFC Sign Program Manager/Office of Strategic Initiatives and the HFC Contracting Office are currently working to select vendors that will develop wayfinding assessments and master plans according to Servicewide sign standards. Future HFC wayfinding projects will be handled by HFC contractors with a HFC Sign Program staff member assigned to serve as a COTR to provide guidance, support and project oversight for the park. Or, if the park has the resources, they can contract directly with the HFC recommended vendors for these services and products. For future cost estimating purposes see Appendix B.

### **Bulletin Boards in Parking Lot**

- Improve existing parking lot bulletin board presentation and content to attain improved readership and ADA legibility.

#### Short-term Recommendations:

- Work with HFC writers and designer via a “Technical Assistance Request” to sharpen content, improve titles, and winnow out topics that are too much for an outdoor presentation.
- Give one staff member responsibility for maintaining park bulletin boards. Work to improve content presentation and visual quality. Use NPS bulletin boards sparingly, and only to display information of a temporary nature. If the information a park wants to post on a bulletin board is valid for longer than two months, it is far better to plan and design a wayside exhibit with focused content and a clear visual hierarchy. Using a bulletin board where you really need a full-time orientation panel is a false economy that shortchanges the visitor, adds to the ongoing workload of the park staff, and detracts from the dignity of the resource. See Appendix C for additional guidance on short-term improvements to park bulletin boards.

#### Long-term Recommendations

- The park plans to work with HFC to develop new waysides for the park. New bulletin boards will be part of this future project. In the interim, it is recommended that the park staff continue to focus on content and presentation, and consult with HFC Wayside Technical Assistance when necessary. See Appendix D for the Wayside Exhibit Concept Plan.

## Fee Collection Operations

- Consult with other parks and the Regional Fee Program Coordinator regarding merging the fee collection activity into visitor center operations and/or converting the fee operation into an electronic collection activity with the installation of an automated fee payment machine and gate at the beginning of the battlefield tour route.

One proposal on the table is to use the long entry lobby into the visitor center to collect the park entrance fee; this area is now used by the Vicksburg Convention and Visitor Bureau to promote Vicksburg sightseeing opportunities. One advantage this proposal offers is that the lobby is a covered area and visitors would not be exposed to inclement weather.

However, if this change is pursued, based on the 2008 VNMP Safety Study's description of use levels during the park's busy season, on busy days it is conceivable that the bottleneck situation described in the parking lot may be transferred to the visitor center lobby. In addition to reducing a welcoming visitor center atmosphere, considering the potential number of visitors in this area, the proposed use of the lobby as a fee collection area may be a cause of concern with the local fire marshal.

If the lobby is developed for fee collection activities, the proposed use of this area for visitor experience planning/orientation and changing exhibits -- discussed in the "Visitor Center" section below -- would be eliminated. Fee collection and exhibits are not viewed as compatible functions in this fairly long and narrow space.

Although labor intensive, most parks use fee monies to support the cost-of-collection to insure that all visitors have contact with at least one staff member during their national park visit. One advantage to this level of personal service is that the staff member collecting park fees makes sure that all visitors receive the park folder (the HFC produced Unigrid brochure) which at Vicksburg is the primary interpretive tool used by visitors along the battlefield tour route. Visitors also have an opportunity to ask a staff member questions before starting on the battlefield tour.

## Visitor Center

### Short Term Visitor Center Recommendations

- Consult with HFC to develop a cost-estimate to proceed with recommended short-term exhibit repairs to improve visitor center operations. Develop a companion budget request in the NPS' PMIS. Once project funding needs are documented, HFC can assist the park staff with developing and prioritizing an implementation strategy based on known funding available. Improvements may be scheduled over a series of fiscal years.
  - Utilize a portion of the existing central desk to accommodate Vicksburg Convention and Visitor Bureau (VCVB) staff. Remove the existing VCVB kiosk and replace with a wall-mounted brochure rack. This will free up the enclosed vestibule space for other uses, and focusing visitor's attention to a central location – the main information desk - for personal assistance. This change will also reinforce the fact that this is primarily a National Park Service facility.
- Develop a more cohesive lobby space to attract visitors to park orientation exhibit panels on the side wall and an updated changing exhibit area along the back wall, possibly with floor to ceiling glass-front cases that allow more flexibility in the types of displays that can be presented in this area. Use of different colors and materials would also help separate the lobby from the bookstore.
- Create simple, well designed identification signs to help orient visitors and direct them to the auditorium and exhibit rooms.
- Work with Eastern National, during the scheduled bookstore re-design, to provide a clearer path to the auditorium. The addition of the new park film (scheduled installation 2010) is going to make the auditorium a much more important destination for visitors interested in a quick overview of the park story and significance.
- Address two issues regarding the recently installed fiber optic battle map to make the program more effective and accessible. The recently installed fiber optic battle map is a very useful addition to the park's interpretive media. The animated presentation provides visitors with a concise overview of the military tactics employed at Vicksburg.

- Remove the central “bomb crater” exhibit, which is ineffective, to provide seating for visitors viewing the fiber optic map exhibit. The program length of seven minutes is two to three times longer than recommended for a stand-up AV presentation within an exhibit gallery. Since it is unlikely that it could be edited to the recommended length and still convey the necessary information, seating should be provided for visitors.
- Improve fiber optic map accessibility. Current NPS accessibility standards for audiovisual programs require captioning for visitors who are deaf, assistive listening technology for those with reduced hearing, and audio description for the visually impaired.
  - a) **Captioning:** Provide a caption board or LCD screen for captions. While a program script could be provided for those with hearing problems, it is not a very effective solution; watching the map program while trying to follow along with a written script would be difficult.
  - b) **Assistive Listening:** Install a transmitter and loop antenna to provide assistive listening. Assistive listening technology broadcasts directly to a user’s hearing aid, or to a receiver and headphones worn by the user.
  - c) **Audio Description:** Audio description provides a description of visual information for visitors with sight impairments. For the battle map, the existing audio program is already quite descriptive. Accessibility could be improved by adding a short introduction describing the map and how lights are used to indicate troop movements. This addition could be useful for all visitors, not just those with visual impairments.
- Improve the vignettes exhibit area. The vignettes (dioramas) currently lining the perimeter of the exhibit room each illustrate an important aspect of the battle and siege of Vicksburg. They are in relatively good condition and in the short term could be enhanced to provide a better interpretive experience. When

the battle map was installed in the exhibit room, audio associated with the other exhibits was disconnected to eliminate competing sound sources in the small room. While necessary with the current setup, this is unfortunate because it reduces the effectiveness of the vignettes.

With the central bomb crater exhibit removed it may be possible to partially enclose the map and seating area with acoustical partition walls to help contain sound spill. With the map audio better contained, individual short (2 to 3 minute) audio programs for each of the perimeter vignettes could be added, accessed through rail-mounted handsets and small LCD caption screens.

Better lighting and additional display elements would also improve the vignettes. For example, the hospital scene could include a wounded soldier or civilian and a nurse. The recently added interpretive panels are effective, but require better lighting. The older labels should be removed, as they are too small and darkly lit to be readable. If necessary, this information should be presented on new panels designed to match the recent ones, or included as part of new audio programs. The

red warning signs (“Please do not lean...”) are too large, obtrusive, and unwelcoming. A smaller and more discrete warning would be better; the motion detectors and alarms provide the backup protection.

### Long Term Visitor Center Recommendations

- Consult with HFC to develop a funding strategy to plan, design and construct new visitor center exhibits. As the park moves forward to correct current VC deficiencies, considering the investment of project funds and staff time, an important future discussion will address: when should the park move forward to plan for the planning and installation of new VC exhibits. This future conversation can guide the future park/HFC collaborative approach regarding cost estimating needs to accomplish a new exhibit design/build contract and the submittal of this information in the NPS PMIS funding request system. An HFC Exhibit Designer participated in the LRIP Recommendations Workshop. Appendix E explores long-term visitor center exhibit recommendations based on workshop discussions and criteria outlined by park staff. These recommendations can be used to inform a future PMIS request to plan, design and construct new exhibits for the visitor center.

## Battlefield Tour Route

The LRIP planning team confirms the importance of returning the battlefield tour route to its original clockwise orientation in order to improve the visitor experience and the delivery of the interpretive story. At this writing, here is a description of the planned battlefield tour circulation route:

*After leaving the parking lot, visitor can proceed along the South Loop starting at the Iowa Monument to Hovey’s approach (the current tour stop 15) and on to Fort Garrott and the Railroad Redoubt. Then visitors would begin the North Loop along Confederate Avenue to the U.S.S. Cairo and Museum. While in this section of the park visitors could also visit the national cemetery, and then continue south along Union Avenue visiting points of interest until their arrival at the visitor center parking lot, where, if interested or necessary, they could stop in one last time before leaving the park. And while in route, if visitors choose to shorten their stay – there are two 2-way roads that enable a visitor to return to the visitor center and exit at Clay Street – Pemberton Avenue and Graveyard Road. Or while in the northwest corner of the park near the U.S.S. Cairo and Vicksburg National Cemetery, visitors can leave via the Connecting Avenue (2-way) at Fort Hill.*

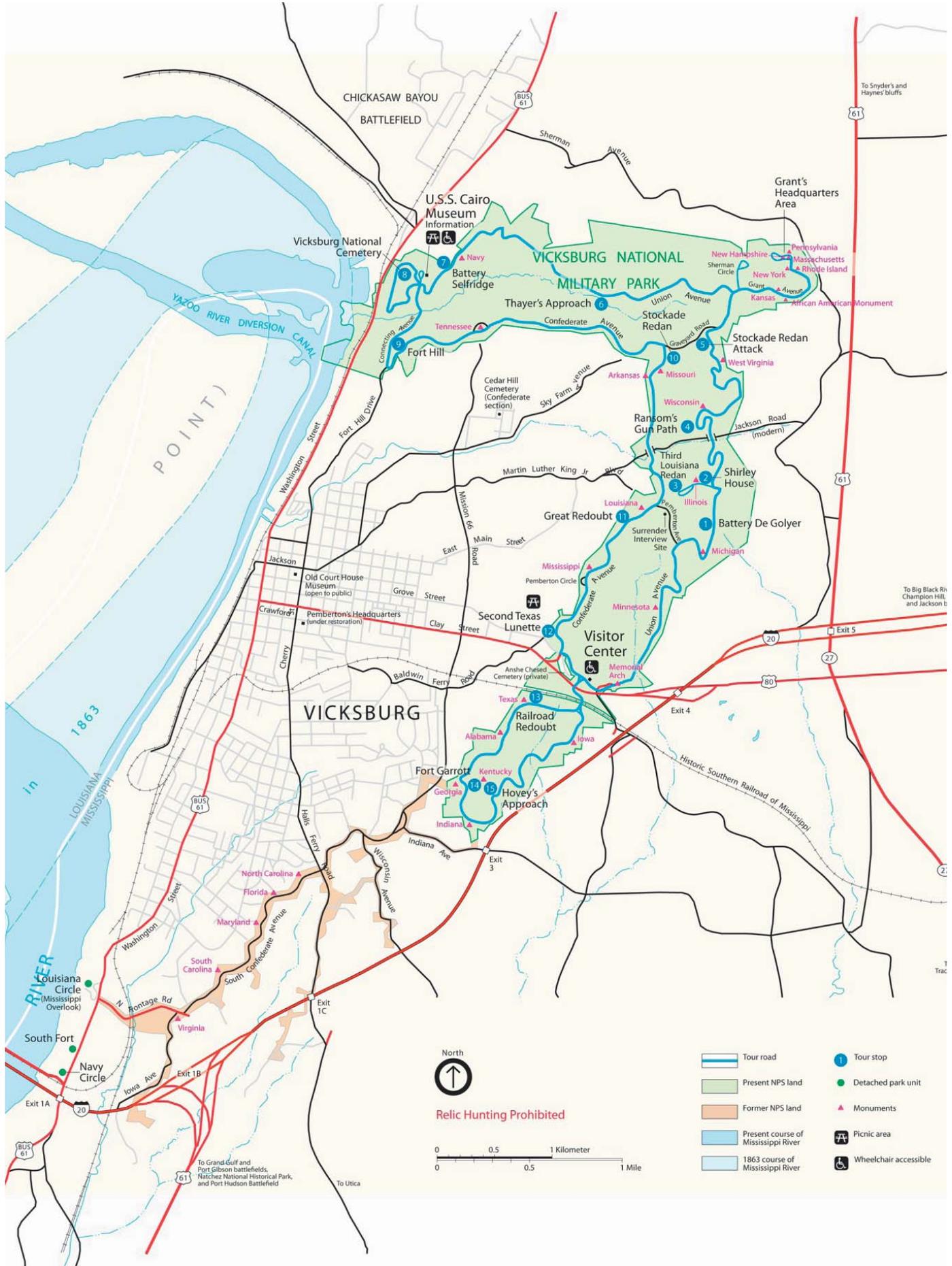
### Short-term Recommendations to Support Battlefield Tour Route Change

- Request HFC through the park’s HFC project manager to create a project specific development team to work collaboratively on new interpretive waysides, a new park brochure and wayfinding signs for the battlefield tour route. This route change requires careful and close coordination for all proposed interpretive media improvements including:
  - Wayfinding – park signs marking the battlefield route;
  - The HFC Unigrd brochure which today is the primary interpretive tool used by visitors;
  - Future interpretive waysides to be placed at key points of interest along the battlefield tour;

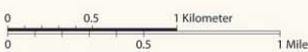
- Cooperating Association publications and audio tours that were designed with the park staff to provide in depth interpretation – for a fee – for park visitors desiring to learn more about the park; and
- Training manuals for staff and the Licensed Battlefield Tour Guides.

### Harpers Ferry Center Produced Unigrd Brochure

- Redesign the HFC Unigrd brochure to incorporate the four thematic park visitor experiences available. A redesigned publication will support visitor experience planning by letting park visitors know what their options are – and visitors will continue to use it as a navigation support device throughout their park visit.



Relic Hunting Prohibited



- Tour road
- Present NPS land
- Former NPS land
- Present course of Mississippi River
- 1863 course of Mississippi River
- 1 Tour stop
- Detached park unit
- ▲ Monuments
- Picnic area
- Wheelchair accessible

- Keep detailed park map with tour route to assist with wayfinding.
- Explain that the battlefield tour route is one-way, similar to a large figure eight – having a north and south loop. Indicate there are several 2-way roads.
- Clearly identify roads that are 2-way to help visitors negotiate through the park particularly in the event visitors desire to shorten their stay or repeat a portion of the route -- to view something missed. Consider using a different color to highlight these 2-way roads, or use another appropriate cartographic method.
- Consider a Vicksburg National Cemetery photo inset tied to the tour route to reinforce and encourage independent exploration of Vicksburg National Cemetery as part of the park experience. This tool will also help visitors viewing recommended park sites related to VNMP's commemorative theme visitor experience.
- Include a description of Pemberton's Headquarters and describe the park preferred route to it via Clay Street.
- Remove numbers on the map that indicate a specific order to see the battlefield. Some recommended thematic visitor experience plans do not start with the south loop. Use park battlefield tour signs to indicate next pull-off along the tour route.
- Through a cartographic identifying method – illustrate which fortifications are Union and which are Confederate. The story is so complex and the landscape so confusing it can be overwhelming; some visitors do not realize that if they are on Union Avenue, they are looking at Union fortifications. Consider a red dot to indicate Confederate forts by the fort name on the map and a blue dot for Union positions. Note: this color would parallel the color on the historic veterans' tablets located throughout the battlefield.
- The Unigrid brochure should invite visitors to get out at each stop to explore the surviving fort feature and explain that nearby will be an interpretive panel that explains the significance of this location. And, near the fort feature are detailed Civil War veteran military plaques that show exact troop positions. The brochure should also briefly explain how to use the veteran's commemorative tablets for more in depth information.

- Briefly explain the ongoing challenge of interpreting the cultural landscape with trees planted in the 1930's to stem erosion that now block what were once clear sight lines between Confederate and Union fortifications. Discuss the park's ongoing program to rehabilitate selected vistas to enhance visitor understanding.
- Seek funding to develop a companion battlefield/wayside audio description tour; the **audio description tour** would be used along the battlefield tour road at waysides placed in these tour stop locations. For visually impaired visitors, the NPS needs to include audio description, such as is now being used in major museums and in theatrical performances. Audio description not only narrates the text of the wayside and describes the graphics seen on the panels, but also describes the third dimension of a wayside — it describes the 21<sup>st</sup> century surrounding view, then moves to interpret what the scene looked like historically and the topic that the wayside discusses in this location.

### Waysides

- Seek funding to develop wayside exhibits and a corresponding battlefield audio description tour (for sight-impaired visitors) for VNMP and Vicksburg National Cemetery. See Appendix D for the Wayside Exhibit Concept Proposal developed by the HFC Wayside Exhibit Planner attending the LRIP Recommendations Workshop.
- Wayside funding would include: the development of a Wayside Exhibit Plan; funding for original artwork and use rights where period illustrations do not exist or support important interpretive themes/concepts; and the fabrication of the wayside exhibits and their corresponding frames.



2nd Texas Lunette Wayside

A project to develop a comprehensive system of new waysides for Vicksburg should include an audio description component from the beginning. Audio description provides **intellectual access to visually impaired visitors**, and can be effective for reaching visitors whose preferred learning style is auditory rather than visual.

- An important part of the future wayside exhibit plan will be the creation of original art to illustrate key concepts. Especially to recreate views now blocked by trees, and to illustrate other key Civil War battlefield elements that are no longer present such as abatis, cheveaux-de-frise, fascines, gabions, headlogs, gun platforms, pickets, military roads, approach tunnels, etc. This interpretive need was also documented in the 2009 Cultural Landscape Report. Through a mix of new interpretive art and use of available period sketches waysides will present important site specific stories to enhance visitor understanding.

This artwork will be a long-term investment for the park. Request HFC to negotiate with the artist for use rights that will enable the park to repurpose the artwork for future interpretive use in other park and partner projects.

## Wayfinding

- Seek funding to support the development of the parkwide wayfinding assessment and master plan previously outlined in the “Arrival Experience” section.

If funding for the parkwide project is delayed, develop a wayfinding assessment and master plan for the battlefield tour route, routes to the park entrances, and key battlefield visitor service facilities. Note: a future scope of work should include a request for a wayfinding assessment with options for the development of future sign/wayfinding master plan.

Note: consider adding additional road guidance on the park roads. For example: **EXHIBITS 200 YARDS AHEAD →**. Since Vicksburg has so many plaques and other sign-like objects to distract first-time motorists’ view, it might be better to paint this kind of warning/announcement directly on pavement in large letters. This text-on-the-ground system is commonly used in Great Britain to announce stops ahead, and has proven effective at both alerting drivers and keeping vistas clear of excess signs.

### Long-term Recommendations Battlefield Tour Route Features and Parking Areas

- Develop a model site plan to guide the future development of the 15 battlefield tour features and supporting pull-off parking areas. This model plan would take a holistic look at Cultural Resource Landscape Report recommendations and visitor use. The purpose of a site plan would be to develop a site design that protects resource features and supports the interpretive experience through design -
  - making the tour stop parking lot an attractive destination that invites use and exploration of the site's historic feature. It would be ideal if resource rehabilitation planning and future visitor use /facility planning could be conducted simultaneously as part of the same project. Placement of future visitor support facilities will be guided by NPS Management Policies and in consultation with the Cultural Landscape Report's preferred alternative. Proposed elements include:
    - Along parking area, include shade trees, benches and bike racks; select model prototypes to be used in all other tour stop areas. Identify the handicap parking space and route to the feature; provide handicap access where the terrain permits.
    - A well placed wayside will be site oriented near the primary feature; site placement will be carefully selected, so as not to interfere with the historic scene.

The future project team should include a landscape architect with design and engineering skills, the Chief of Maintenance, the Chief of Operations and the Park Historian. After the model site plan is developed, installed and evaluated, the park could initiate a funding request to design and upgrading parking lots with associated visitor facilities in small segments; or seek project funding to redesign and rehabilitate the remaining parking lots under the same design/build contract.

## Shirley House

The planning team confirms the future use of this structure as an interpretive exhibit, pending the physical stabilization and rehabilitation of the structure. The Shirley House is the only surviving residence on the battlefield. In 2004, the NPS Design Advisory Board approved park plans to seek funding to restore the building. The cost-estimate to proceed with the project is over 2 million dollars.

Future exhibits will focus on park themes that interpret the impact of the war, siege and Reconstruction on civilians and the military use of the structure during the Civil War. Including:

- Prior to the Civil War, the site was a farm owned by the Shirley family, whose political views supported the Union although they were slave holders.
- Later, it was occupied by the Union Army's 45<sup>th</sup> Illinois Infantry Unit during the battle and siege and later used as a hospital for soldiers suffering from small pox.
- Reconstruction theme: the 1874 race riots resulted in tragic vigilante hangings in front of Shirley House.

### Short-term Recommendations

- Improve site interpretation with the replacement of new waysides identified in proposal included in Appendix D:
  - The Sole Survivor from the Civil War
  - Northerners Who Owned Slaves
  - What Historic Preservation Costs
- Assemble resource packets for future exhibit development related to the aforementioned themes.

### Media Guidance for Shirley House Future Exhibits

Future use of the Shirley house interior for exhibits is contingent on rehabilitation of the structure. Nevertheless, this original structure is a valuable resource and remains the most effective location for interpreting several key park themes, since it has direct connections with all of them. The ground floor of the Shirley House includes more than enough space to house exhibits interpreting these themes.

Given current and projected park staffing levels exhibits need to be planned on the assumption that the Shirley House will be unstaffed. The inability to provide staff for this structure limits the exhibit techniques that can be used, primarily text and graphics, along with some durable three-dimensional elements. Artifacts would not be appropriate here due to insufficient security. Interpretively, one or more historically furnished rooms with reproduction items would be very effective to illustrate historic uses of the Shirley House. These rooms would need glass barriers to prevent visitor entry into the space.

### **Old Visitor Center/Administrative Building**

- Create a prominent and well designed sign that indicates the structure is a non-historic structure used for administrative purposes. Planning team assessment: The civilian story can best be interpreted elsewhere in the park, such as the Shirley House and Pemberton's Headquarters.

Note: this building is used for many "behind the scenes" park uses; the park has determined that it would be difficult or expensive to relocate this building. The Old Visitor Center is located along the tour route near the surrender site. Its ante-bellum design, size and parking lot make it a visitor point of curiosity; many visitors wonder if the building is connected to the battlefield.

There are several future options the park might consider with this location.

- Since there is a parking area, a modest rest-stop could be established with picnic tables and porta-jons tastefully screened with lattice work.
- If future funding becomes available, convert a portion of the building to serve as a classroom setting for curriculum-based education programming.
- Or, if planned "behind the scenes" use continues, the park could erect a chain link rope barrier, with a sign attached that explains the building's purpose -- to prevent curious visitors from stopping in, when park vehicles are parked in this location.

### **U.S.S. Cairo Exhibit and the U.S.S. Cairo Museum**

#### **Arrival Experience:**

- Improve the arrival experience at the site parking lot. Provide an inviting and informative wayside that encourages exploration of the gunboat and museum. Visitor feedback indicates many believe there is an additional entrance fee to visit the *U.S.S. Cairo* Museum.

It is also important to provide some interpretation in the parking lot; a summary of why the *U.S.S. Cairo* is significant and how this surviving gunboat connects to the struggle to control the Mississippi during the Civil War.

## U.S.S. Cairo Gunboat

### Short-term Recommendations:

- Continue steps to further minimize deterioration to the gunboat due to the outdoor environment. Conduct a conservation survey that includes recommendations with range of approaches within realistic budget possibilities.
- Convert mounting for 23 small interpretive wayside panels into deck-mounted bases set in front of the safety railing in order to make these interpretive waysides accessible to all visitors. Note: the panels are in excellent condition and do not need to be replaced. The current waysides at the *U.S.S. Cairo* provide valued interpretive information; however, the panels are mounted inside the barrier rail that keeps visitors from falling into the concrete basin where the *U.S.S. Cairo* now rests. A person standing up has no problem seeing and reading the panels. The safety railing blocks the panel for visitors using a wheelchair.

### Long-term Recommendations:

- Seek necessary support and funding to place this sole surviving original object in an enclosed structure, to insure its long-term preservation. While the original interpretive concept was certainly creative in its day – and to this day, this incredible

outdoor exhibit is enjoyed by many, its current treatment is out of sync with NPS preservation/conservation policies. As currently treated, the exhibit sends a mixed NPS preservation message. In addition, the outdoor exhibit treatment creates a tremendous and continuing conservation effort on the part of the staff to care for the *U.S.S. Cairo*. The level of care would be alleviated, if in the future, the gunboat was enclosed with an environmentally controlled and visitor-experience friendly structure. In addition, if the entire exhibit space is enclosed and climate controlled, a future exhibit treatment could bring ship to life with stove, clusters of artifacts in exhibit cases associated with mannequins/silhouettes.

### Future Exhibit and Programmatic Opportunities in the Plaza:

The *U.S.S. Cairo* is displayed outside under a canopy that was designed to protect the ship against the sun's harmful rays. The tent creates a covered plaza and provides excellent opportunities for new interpretive elements. The overhead canopy, fencing, and other security already in place create a hospitable environment in which visitors can interact with exterior exhibits. With the impressive display of the *U.S.S. Cairo* as a focal point, there are good opportunities to interpret naval activities on the Mississippi River. Ideally the lower plaza level

could be reopened for visitor use, and some of the new interpretive elements placed here. A large map of the Mississippi River near Vicksburg could be painted or illustrated in contrasting materials on the plaza floor, accompanied by exhibit panels describing the river's strategic importance in transporting supplies, and the naval strategies employed by the Union. A small amphitheater for ranger talks would also be effective here.

Elsewhere on the plaza, with the *U.S.S. Cairo* as a backdrop, exhibits could interpret the Anaconda Plan and the history and technology of the Civil War ironclads. This story can be presented much more effectively here, rather than its current location in a dark, cramped gallery inside of the *U.S.S. Cairo* Museum. Within the relatively protected plaza, some audiovisual elements could be included with these exterior exhibits.

Human stories may also be added to the plaza through life-size figures and the personal accounts of individuals who served on the boat.

Other future interpretive possibilities and exhibit ideas as funding occurs:

- Ghost out more human details within vessel, add mannequins or silhouettes of people working in boiler room, sleeping in hammock, on deck doing a variety of chores, shoveling coal, cooking at stove, etc.
- Create an audio soundscape that is delivered both at the *U.S.S. Cairo* and in the museum. Appendix F provides proposed project details and sources for cost estimating.

## The U.S.S. Cairo Museum

### Short-term:

- Improve the object identification system; and, since the purpose and use of some artifacts may not be apparent to modern visitors, provide descriptions and illustrations.
- Make human connections wherever possible. For example, photographs retrieved from the boat could be projected on the walls, and a soundscape of ship sounds, including voices of the crew, recreated in the space.
- Modernize the exhibit lighting system. Rather than external illumination from ceiling fixtures, internal fiber optic or LED case lighting may be the best approach for illuminating many of the artifacts. Separate illuminators, or backlighting may be used to provide the higher light levels required for viewing interpretive panels. This could be integrated into an interpretive rail system.
- Create a new short video on the discovery and retrieval of the *U.S.S. Cairo* from the Yazoo River. The existing film in the *U.S.S. Cairo* Museum is dated and should be retired; 16mm film and master tapes of this program are stored at HFC. Footage of the salvage operation could serve as a basis for a new exhibit video, either for the use inside of the museum, or in an exterior exhibit on the plaza.

- Create a display that illustrates the volume and variety of items taken from the boat, since the museum can only display a small portion of the collection. This could take the form of a sculptural element in the center of the exhibit room, possibly incorporating footage of the salvage operation.
- The alcove gallery currently used as an exhibit on the history and technology of Civil War ironclads is not working well. The bookstore could be relocated to this space, freeing up the museum entry area for a better museum entry experience.
- The entry lobby would also be a logical location for the existing scale model of the *U.S.S. Cairo*.

#### Long-term:

- Determine if the park anticipates having funding to proceed with a complete exhibit replacement within the life of this LRIP; or, due to funding limitations can only proceed with exhibit improvements as funding becomes available. Request HFC to provide two cost estimates for the museum:
  - A cost-estimate that addresses short-term exhibit improvements outlined above; and
  - A cost-estimate to replace the *U.S.S. Cairo* Museum Exhibit in its entirety.

A comparison will guide future decision making and help establish parkwide priorities based on exhibit requirements at Pemberton's Headquarters and the VNMP visitor center. Once priorities are clear, and funding sources identified, HFC can help the park strategize an implementation plan.

Within the timeframe of this LRIP, the current exhibit will be 30+ years old and nearing the end of its useful lifetime. Periodic updates could extend this life, but ideally a new exhibit installation should be planned for the museum. New exhibits would take advantage of modern technology, better address current park themes, and reflect new accessibility and interpretation standards. The *U.S.S. Cairo* Museum was originally built to display a selection of objects salvaged with the gunboat. If new exhibits are planned for this space, they should continue to highlight and take advantage of this tremendous resource.

## Vicksburg National Cemetery

- Improve visitor understanding of this deeply evocative site. The VNMP staff has identified this site as an important component of the park experience; and directly related to visitor experience goals. Currently the cemetery is an untapped interpretive resource; it is now treated as a place for relatives to return and honor loved ones; and, as a drive through visual experience for interested visitors.

The Cemetery provides a unique interpretive opportunity to explore theme 8, and interpret the history of commemoration at Vicksburg National Cemetery and its relevance to 21<sup>st</sup> century visitors:

- Vicksburg National Cemetery and the monuments within Vicksburg National Military Park exhibit the commitment of a grateful nation and its effort to honor sacrifices of soldiers and sailors, whose devotion to duty and shared war-time experiences, transcend the boundaries of North and South, reflecting a Nation reunited.

### Sub-theme

*Immediately following the Civil War, even in death, equal treatment did not occur. Today, Vicksburg National Military Cemetery honors all Americans who have given their lives in the Service of this Country.*

- Burials at Vicksburg National Cemetery (VNC) reflected the social and political issues triggering the Civil War. United States Colored Troops (USCT) were buried in separate sections at VNC; while Confederate soldiers (approximately 5,000 men) were buried in “Cedar Hill Cemetery”, the city’s cemetery, located in another section of Vicksburg.



National Cemetery on Memorial Day

- Depending on the era, National days of honor such as Memorial/ Decoration Day, Fourth of July and Veterans Day were some time opened to all and at other times segregated. During WWII the National Park Service adopted a policy of segregated services for the families honoring soldiers buried in Vicksburg National Cemetery; this practice was discontinued late in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.
- Following the Civil War, Vicksburgers of African American descent conducted some of their first public gatherings in Vicksburg National Cemetery. Their events were largely ignored by other residents, as the gatherings were held in a cemetery honoring 17,000 Union war dead (soldiers and sailors) – including United States Colored Troop soldiers. These Vicksburgers’ celebrated their freedom and freedom of speech by reading the Emancipation Proclamation; and, in so doing honored all who gave their lives for freedom and equality.
- Seek funding to support the development of the parkwide wayside exhibit plan. The Wayside Exhibit Concept Proposal in Appendix D identifies four topics to be interpreted:
  - Starting a Cemetery
  - Postwar Reburials
  - Segregation Even in Death
  - Where Were the Confederates Buried?
- Look at the site arrival experience, much of the information currently posted is reminiscent of the War Department era. New interpretive media should address: how can people locate someone buried in the cemetery; how is the cemetery laid out, is it permissible to walk through the cemetery, whose buried there and why; is this still an active cemetery, and what is that big house located next to the cemetery? Most of these basic visitor questions should be handled near the cemetery entrance. Others discussed in interpretive panels placed throughout the cemetery. Vicksburg National Cemetery is an important visitor destination and park experience. Future interpretation will be sensitive to its significance and the commemorative nature of the site.

- Implement LRIP workshop programmatic and media ideas as funding becomes available
  - Develop a site bulletin, for visitors interested in walking through the cemetery – identify key points of interest. For example: where is the United States Colored Troops sections?
  - Link commemorative monuments to points of interest in the cemetery; determine the most appropriate interpretive tool – it may be the park website and/or the GPS Ranger program. When available, future visitor access on-site could be provided at the visitor center and in the *U.S.S. Cairo* Museum.
  - Plan a special event: invite local Vicksburgers and park visitors for an annual walk that commemorates Memorial Day; formerly known as “Decoration Day”.

## Pemberton's Headquarters

### Interpretive Focus

During the earliest days of the Union Army's offensive to gain control of Vicksburg, General Pemberton moved his headquarters to the family residence of Widow Martha Willis. From this location General Pemberton directed the defense of Vicksburg during the 47-day siege and made the momentous decision to surrender to General Ulysses Grant on July 4, 1863. For Vicksburg residents General Pemberton's surrender marked the beginning of Union Army occupation and Reconstruction (July 4, 1863 – 1875). During the siege and Reconstruction periods, this community faced unprecedented changes and challenges that reverberate to the present day.

### Pemberton's Headquarters: Park Themes

Park themes for Pemberton's Headquarters were developed by park staff, historians and stakeholders during the Long-Range Interpretive Planning process. These themes include:

- **Sub-theme 1b: The Military Experience:** Pemberton's Headquarters provides a glimpse in to the workings of a Confederate command post where strategies were developed and decisions made, including the decision to surrender Vicksburg on July 3, 1863.



During the siege, General Pemberton directed the defense of Vicksburg from the residence of Widow Martha Willis.

- **Sub-theme 1c: The Military Experience:** The July 4, 1863, surrender of Vicksburg resulted in significant losses for the Confederacy including the surrender of 30,000 Confederate defenders; the loss of 11% of Confederate artillery assets; and, coupled with the fall of Port Hudson five days later, the loss of immediate access to logistical support (manpower and supplies) from Texas, Louisiana, and Arkansas, due to the Union gaining complete control of the Mississippi River. For the Federal Government, simultaneous Union Army victories at Vicksburg, MS and Gettysburg, PA signaled the turning point of the American Civil War.
- **Theme 5: Siege and Fall of Vicksburg:** Civilians in Vicksburg endured a 47-day siege, an ordeal bringing out the fortitude and resilience of individuals to survive no matter the cost. *(See “Interpretive Themes” section of this document for sub-themes a, b & c.)*
- **Theme 6: The Occupation of Vicksburg:** The military occupation of Vicksburg on July 4, 1863 and the emancipation of enslaved residents, unleashed a political battle over state sovereignty, civil rights, and the power of government to remake and police society; these struggles became iconic for the nation. The Union Army occupied Vicksburg from 1863-1875. *(See “Interpretive Themes” section of this document for sub-themes a & b.)*
- **Theme 7: Reconstruction Period:** From 1865 – 1875, the Union Army, other Federal agencies and the Vicksburg, Mississippi civilian government struggled to find solutions to re-establish social and economic order after war. Vicksburg, Mississippi provides insight into the challenges, changes and consequences faced by residents and public officials during this period of American history. *(See “Interpretive Themes” section of this document for sub-themes a, b c, d, e, & f.)*
  - Continue research related to interpretive themes to be discussed at Pemberton’s Headquarters; particularly themes 5 – 7 which address the civilian experience during occupation and Reconstruction in order to inform and guide the development of the future interpretive program.

Note: during the LRIP workshops park staff, scholars and partners worked together to develop holistic interpretive themes that reflect the Vicksburg civilian experience during the siege, occupation and the Reconstruction era, as mandated by the 1990 enabling legislation for Pemberton’s Headquarters. In the future, some of the sub-themes identified in themes 5 – 7 will be interpreted in future programs and exhibits at Pemberton’s Headquarters; while others will be carried out through partnerships within the Vicksburg, MS community.

### Facility/Facility Use:

- Open Pemberton’s Headquarters as a 7-day operation as requisite funding occurs for personal services and exhibits. In the interim focus on:
  - Site repairs and maintenance; develop visitor support facilities such as parking, handicap access and wayfinding;
  - Collaborate with HFC to develop professionally produced exhibits;
  - Complete staff hiring and training; and
  - Continue efforts to maintain local interest, goodwill and community access by opening the site on a temporary basis for special programs and events.

### Pre-visit

#### Short-term:

- Develop a web page link for Pemberton’s Headquarters that includes site significance and features, hours of operation, programs, services and directions and any other information that would be helpful for trip planning including links to partner websites in the Vicksburg, MS community. This webpage should be ready to launch when the park is ready to open and operate the site.

- Contact local tourism and community partners and provide them with site information for posting on their websites.

### Arrival Experience

- Seek funding to develop a parkwide wayfinding/sign master plan for VNMP. Contact HFC for assistance to develop a cost estimate that includes the development of (1) a wayfinding assessment and (2) a wayfinding master plan. A future scope of work should include a request for a wayfinding assessment with options for the development of future sign/wayfinding master plan.

The ideal approach would be to seek funding for a parkwide wayfinding assessment that includes Pemberton’s Headquarters. However, if Pemberton’s Headquarters is ready to open and operate before funding is available to develop the parkwide plan, then request HFC to provide technical assistance to review all park proposed Pemberton’s Headquarters sign designs for building identification and wayfinding -- including text and contractor specifications -- prior to ordering these products from a vendor. Taking this recommended step will help to insure that new signage meets Servicewide graphic identity requirements and standards. The HFC Sign Program Office/ Strategic Initiatives traditionally provides this type of guidance and assistance to all parks.

## Background Information for Future Site Access

For clarity, throughout the remainder of this document the rooms within Pemberton's Headquarters are identified by the numbering system used in the 2004 Pemberton's Headquarters Historic Structures Report. A copy of the Pemberton's Headquarters first and second floor plans with identifying room numbers is included in this section of the document, following the "Work Plan for Pemberton's Headquarters" section.

### Accessibility

Parking for site staff and the general public will be provided in designated areas along City of Vicksburg streets and in a nearby church parking lot, through an agreement with the Church of the Holy Trinity.

The small parking lot behind Pemberton's Headquarters will be used for handicap access, site deliveries and intermittent, short-term and pre-authorized parking to support administrative and maintenance needs.

While it would be ideal if the site could bring all visitors in through the Crawford Street front door entrance, the height of the front porch and the lot configuration prevent this level of access. Future handicap access will be provided from the parking lot behind Pemberton's Headquarters. A signed pathway will lead mobility impaired visitors to a lift that will bring visitors into a hallway (room 106A); this hallway access can be easily viewed by the interpreter stationed near the front door.

However, because the interpreter may be chatting with guests in one of the front rooms, a pleasant sounding bell should be installed that rings when the door at the lift is opened, so the interpreter is aware that someone has come in through the handicap entrance and can excuse themselves to properly greet other new visitors.

It is expected that during the early years of operation, visitation to Pemberton's Headquarters will be moderate. Following a welcome and brief introduction to the site provided by the interpreter, visitors will be able to explore Pemberton's Headquarters exhibits at their own pace. While some visitors may prefer to view the exhibits on their own, others may enjoy more in depth information provided by the staff. Anticipated visitation may on some days give the staff an opportunity to stroll with visitors through the exhibit while providing roving interpretation. On other occasions, the exhibit may serve as a backdrop to guided tours by appointment.

Considering these interpretive scenarios, it is possible that the interpreter might be with a group at the back of the house, and would not hear the front door open when new guests arrive. It will be important to lock the front door and permit entrance to the site by ringing a door bell; or, if a more open environment is desired, a bell could be installed that would sound when the front-door is opened by visitors. Since it is recommended that two warning bells are installed to facilitate site security and visitor service, it will be important that each bell has a different tone.

## On-site Experience

- Seek funding to develop wayside exhibits and a corresponding audio description tour (sight-impaired visitors) for all VNMP areas including Pemberton's Headquarters; see parkwide recommendations for interpretive waysides. The ideal approach would be to seek funding for a parkwide wayfinding assessment that includes Pemberton's Headquarters.

However, if Pemberton's Headquarters is ready to open and operate before funding is available to develop a parkwide plan, then request HFC to provide technical assistance to establish NPS interpretive presence at Pemberton's Headquarters through the use of HFC's Wayside Technical Assistance program to design, develop, and produce waysides to interpret Pemberton's Headquarters and link it to the greater park story. See: <http://www.nps.gov/hfc/products/waysides/way-techassist.htm>. Proposed outdoor interpretive exhibits include:

- What to See and Do, upright wayside
- Tour Route Orientation, upright wayside
- Site-specific stories told, low-profile waysides
- This Week's Activities, upright bulletin board

- Seek funding to plan, design, construct and install interpretive exhibits for the first floor of Pemberton's Headquarters.

- Consult with HFC to obtain a cost-estimate that reflects planning, evaluation, construction and installation in order to prepare a cost-estimate for submittal to a PMIS funding request. Provide HFC cost estimator with the total square footage of proposed exhibit space.

Since this will be the first time the park interprets on a large scale topics related to the events, impacts and issues surrounding Reconstruction, it is recommended that the project budget also includes money to support three phases of evaluation of the exhibit: front-end, formative and summative evaluation studies.

- **Front-End Evaluation** is conducted during the beginning of a project, when themes, story lines, and program ideas are being considered. Front-end evaluation concentrates on getting input from potential visitors by means of interviews and/or focus groups, to find out what kinds of information they need and would like to know, and how this information could be presented in a meaningful, interesting, and cost-effective way. Misconceptions about the subject matter are also revealed at this stage, often leading to specific content and presentation elements designed to counter them.

- **Formative Evaluation** is conducted before the fabrication of interpretive media, when mock-up testing can be carried out. Formative evaluation is intended to “catch” design and/or content problems before they become a part of the final interpretive media, when they are often difficult and expensive to fix.
- **Summative/Remedial Evaluation** is conducted after final media production, when the total “package” can be evaluated and final adjustments can be made. In a comprehensive evaluation program, the conduct of summative/remedial studies often reveal problems that were not, or could not be, identified during the earlier stages of development. For example, crowd-flow problems are often revealed only when the actual configuration of all the elements of the exhibition are in place. Similarly, orientation and signage problems become “obvious” at this point, and can often be corrected by relatively minor adjustments to wording and/or placement.

### **Background Information for Future Interpretive Exhibit and Program Area**

Due to accessibility requirements, only the 1<sup>st</sup> floor will be used for interpretive programming on a daily basis. In order to maintain the integrity of the original fabric of the historic house, an elevator will not be installed. A public restroom will be provided on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor; and, a room on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor has been set aside for a staff office, in the event a future staff member requires an office on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor due to any physical limitations.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> floor will be used to support behind the scenes park operations. It is recommended that a simple ribbon barrier be used at the base of the stairway in room 104 to prevent public access to the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor. However, it should also be noted that the stairway is one of the most beautiful architectural features in the house. For the curious, the park may choose to allow the public to climb the stairs up to the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor hall (room 204) while keeping other 2<sup>nd</sup> floor rooms locked when a staff member is not using the space. This alternative enables marginal access if members of the public express an interest in seeing the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor, they could at least venture to the top of the stairs in to room 204 – the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor center hallway.

On occasion, the park may sponsor a tour focusing on the preservation of Pemberton’s Headquarters and its many historic uses since construction – or receive a request for this type of “behind the scenes tour.” If the park chooses to facilitate this type of request, it will be incumbent on the staff to maintain their offices in a “ready for company” condition. However, it should be noted this kind of tour will not be the focus of this unit’s interpretive program – the exception rather than a core programmatic element.



This commemorative statue of Lt. General John C. Pemberton is located on the Vicksburg Battlefield.

## First Floor Exhibits/Treatment

All future exhibit designs should be sensitive to the nature of the building – remembering it’s a historic house.

- Exhibits Phase 1: Recommend when Pemberton’s Headquarters opens, professionally produced exhibits that are **moderately priced** are in place. Exhibits/historic treatments should set a tone of importance but not permanence. Why? The park may learn a great deal during the first years of operating and want to change to content and focus of the exhibits after the first 3 – 5 years of research and program experimentation. See HFC media specialists’ recommendations for content direction.
- Important elements: propose that each room have a thematic focus. Future exhibit elements (historic vignettes, reproduction artwork, objects, etc.) would include something compelling that draws visitors in and serves as an interpretive focal point that the interpretive staff can use to expand upon park themes in conversations and programs with the public. Recommend including a place to sit down in each exhibit area in order to accommodate mobility impaired visitors and guests that need to sit after a long day of sightseeing.

- In addition to the proposed exhibit topics identified, there may be interested visitors or school groups desiring an opportunity for more in depth research using the park website, archives, or an interactive program developed in conjunction with future Pemberton's Headquarters exhibits. Future exhibit planning will consider the most appropriate location for this type of interpretive feature.

### First Floor

#### **Center Hall and extensions (Rooms 102, 107 and 106A):**

Visitors will enter room 102 – the center hall – from the original entrance on Crawford Street.

Recommended exhibit treatment: in keeping with the historic use of these rooms as a center hall and as an area for entertaining, the hallways should not be used as primary exhibit space. Instead, they should include some interpretive elements such as reproduction framed photographs that might trace the history of occupancy and/or illustrate the ongoing restoration of the site.

Furnishings should include reproduction chairs, coat racks, umbrella stands, etc to accommodate 21<sup>st</sup> century visitor needs. This area should be welcoming and open, in addition to the hospitable and informed staff that greets visitors will greatly influence visitor impressions and expectations.

#### **Room 103, Pemberton's Office:**

The interpretive focus for this room will reflect its use by General Pemberton as his office and location for staff meetings sometimes referred to as “Councils of War” – essentially the nucleus of planning for the Vicksburg's defense while under siege conditions. Future exhibit topics should include:

- How a military headquarters operates: what activities occurred here and how these activities relate to the siege and defensive operations along Confederate fortifications;
- Identify other key staff members stationed here and how this staff worked together to strategize and defend Vicksburg;
- Discuss the events leading to Pemberton's decision to surrender – the final “Council of War”; and, highlight its impacts on Confederacy and community (foreshadow rest of story) – if visitors don't have the time to explore exhibits beyond the 1<sup>st</sup> room.
- Demonstrate that the house was not immune to siege conditions – it was struck twice.

**Room 101, room opposite Pemberton’s Office:**

- Interpretive focus: discuss Union occupation during the last years of the war and Vicksburg during the Reconstruction era (July 4, 1863 – 1877).
- This room should also include an association sales area with thematic sales material available, including the most important battlefield titles.

**Room 108:** The interpretive focus (themes 5-7): the civilian experience for enslaved and free Africans during ante-bellum years, the siege, and following their emancipation on July 4, 1863. The previously discussed themes and recommendations provided by HFC media specialist will guide future exhibit development.

**Room 105, “old dining room”:**

- Remove the bathroom installed (room 106B) during the bed and breakfast era in order to restore the original dimensions of the dining room. This change will enable the site to use this room for future programs and as an exhibit space. Note: care should be taken in future exhibit design and window treatments so that the area can be used for interpretive programs that require seating or use of audiovisual materials.

- Continue to interpret themes 5-7 in this room. Topics should include the impact of the siege on civilians. From this room the historic Balfour house is easily seen. Mrs. Balfour kept a journal which records her observations of activities while General Pemberton and his staff resided here and her experiences and impressions of the siege and occupation.

**Room 109B:** This room is located in the southeast corner of the house off of the kitchen and will be set aside as a 1<sup>st</sup> floor staff office space.

Second Floor

(To be used as behind the scenes work space.)

**Room 204, upper staircase hallway:** if the offices and storage spaces on the 2nd floor can be locked, when members of the public express an interest in seeing the 2nd floor, they could at least venture to the top of the stairs into room 204.

**Room 203:** Park archives and library to support the ongoing development of interpretive themes and programming (secure space).

**Room 202:** Program planning area; furnished with 21<sup>st</sup> century office furniture including a large table, comfortable chairs, book shelves, and files. This room can be used as an interpretive research/reading space for staff and volunteers, and visiting researchers by appointment only.

**Room 208B:** Restroom: emergency back-up public restroom space; not accessible; this room is located off of the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor center hall (room 204).

**Room 209A:** Volunteer in Parks Program (VIP) staging area with bathroom (209B) and storage closet (209C). This large area is accessible from the back portion of the house via a staircase that ascends from the kitchen. This room will serve the unit in two ways – volunteers can store their gear here when reporting for duty; and the room will also provide storage space for items related to the unit VIP program. (This area can be secured from rooms 201, 202, and 203.)

Note: Pemberton’s Headquarters future interpretive program will include numerous volunteers and partners that will assist with interpretation and visitor services. These staff members will also conduct special thematic tours of downtown pointing out other Vicksburg sites related to the siege, occupation and Reconstruction years.

#### Second Floor Offices:

- Room 201 with bathroom (208B);
- Room 205 with bathroom 206B (can be secured, if necessary);
- Room 206A could be used as a small office or could be used for secure NPS storage space for supplies.

## HFC Media Specialists' Recommendations for Pemberton's Headquarters:

Located in downtown Vicksburg away from the main battlefield tour road, Pemberton's Headquarters is likely to receive fewer and different visitors from those who tour the battlefield. Visitors who come here may have more specific interests, and/or bring a better knowledge of Civil War Vicksburg. Exhibits can respond to this audience by focusing on more in-depth interpretation.

The significance of this structure, and the reason it has been included in the park is that General Pemberton used it as his headquarters and made the decision to surrender here. The ideal exhibit solution for General Pemberton's office combines a furnished vignette with an adjacent interpretive exhibit on Pemberton and the siege leading up to the surrender decision.

The remaining rooms on the lower level of this house can be used for themes 5 – 7. There is ample space in this structure for exhibits interpreting Vicksburg before and after the Civil War. Media techniques should be compatible with the historic nature of the house, placed more as furniture within the space rather than obscuring architectural elements. An exhibit on restoration of the historic house and grounds does not reach the same level of importance as themes 1-b, 1-c, and themes 5-7, but could be considered an aspect of the commemoration theme.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of this building is less suitable for exhibits, primarily due to the additional costs and logistics required to make it accessible to visitors. Also, the cost for professionally designed and produced exhibits to fill these additional spaces would be very high. This area would best be reserved for staff and operational uses.

Research could be conducted on interpretive themes in order to create resource packets for exhibit planning. This work should be accomplished as soon as possible; *at least one year prior* to the funding received for Pemberton's Headquarters exhibit planning.

## Other Pemberton's Headquarters Exhibit Topics

- Include a vignette of the *Vicksburg Freedmen's Bureau* school: there is rare documentation for the interior of this very early school (see p. 30 of Virginia DuBowy's *Glimpses of the African-American Experience*) documented in *Harpers Weekly*, June 23, 1866). Additional research on this specific school is likely to prove wonderfully fruitful:

- where was it located,
- is the structure still standing?
- research on students, teacher (Mrs. Green), school reports etc.

see especially:

- The Sisters of Mercy cared for wounded soldiers during the Vicksburg campaign and later purchased the home once occupied by General Pemberton on Crawford Street during the Vicksburg siege. The Sisters of Mercy owned the residence from April 10, 1919 until March 19, 1983. During their period of ownership they used the structure as a convent and later a school.
- USCT as garrison soldiers in Vicksburg
- Davis Bend experiment

## Resources

Freedmen's Bureau Schools – Teachers' Monthly Reports (will give the number of students who had been slaves and other information about students);

Span, Christopher M. "I Must Learn Now or Not at All": Social and Cultural Capital in the Educational Initiatives of Formerly Enslaved African Americans in Mississippi, 1862-1869," *The Journal of African American History*, 2002 pp 196-222.

*Harpers Weekly*, June 23, 1866 - need to review full text of original article because it likely contains more information.

Additional sources for new interpretive themes include Freedmen's Bureau Papers – in addition to the information about schools themselves these papers provide rich information on:

- Violence towards Blacks
- Health and food issues



PHOTO CREDIT: U.S. NATIONAL ARCHIVES

Rare images of Freedmen's schools illustrate opportunities Reconstruction provided for those formerly enslaved.

- Sanitary Commission’s “A Report on the Condition of the Freedmen in Mississippi.” 186-[exact year not known]
- Provost Marshall’s Records (check both NARAs, and/or Atlanta NARA)
- Period of occupation and civilian issues
- Southern Claims Commission records
- American Civil War Letters database
- Newspapers

Note: as site specific research progresses, it is recommended that where possible the research is preserved electronically in order to provide future electronic access for interpreters, students and scholars. For example: future research that sheds light on student life for newly emancipated Vicksburgers, may provide wonderful learning opportunities in a future curriculum based education program.

## Personal Services

- Seek Servicewide OFS funding to support the addition of two interpretive positions to cover the year-round interpretive operational program needs at Pemberton’s Headquarters and to assist with emergency back-up interpretive operational needs at the visitor center and *U.S.S. Cairo* Museum. The required interpretive positions for Pemberton’s Headquarters includes a GS 9 interpretive ranger and a GS 5 park guide. The GS 9 position will be responsible for program development and delivery. The park guide will assist in the delivery of pre-planned interpretive programs; provide visitor information, orientation and assistance and conduct sales for the cooperating association.

It is important to note that these interpretive positions do **not** reflect the overall parkwide need to increase funding to support other unfunded interpretive positions; see the parkwide recommendations for personnel increases.

- Utilize the VNMP historian position to launch a research program that specifically addresses the parkwide themes that will guide the development of the interpretive program at Pemberton’s Headquarters -- the future interpretive program includes:



Community Life in Vicksburg is interpreted through living history programs.

- personal services (staff and volunteer led tours for the general public, roving interpretation, school programs, and special events);
- interpretive media; and
- partnerships that support the delivery of the interpretive program.

There is nothing worse for an interpreter than to be put out there to dialogue and communicate with the public without having the solid body of research behind them. Battlefield interpreters have 100+ years of research behind them. Ongoing research to flesh out the Pemberton's Headquarters themes is necessary.

This research should also inform the development of Pemberton's Headquarters historic furnishings research, and exhibition themes content (civilian siege life and Reconstruction in Vicksburg) and support the development of resource packets for exhibit planning. These materials should be developed as soon as possible but *at least one year prior* to funding for the exhibit planning.

- Continue work with the community to discuss the NPS's intent to use Pemberton's Headquarters' as a window to discuss the siege, occupation and Reconstruction era (in light of the 1990 enabling legislation).
- Conduct whatever internal discussion needs to occur with the Mississippi delegation to reinforce park interpretive approaches, in light of legislation directives.
- Initiate discussions with tourism partners regarding opportunities, impacts and issues.
- Build on series of planning discussions held with community residents and scholars regarding how to interpret Civil War, occupation, emancipation and Reconstruction with integrity and sensitivity.
- Consider Pemberton's Headquarters as a learning place where interested park visitors and residents can discover, explore and discuss the history surrounding Vicksburg's siege, occupation and Reconstruction together.
- Take on the civic engagement portion of interpretation. The 21<sup>st</sup> century National Park Service recognizes the responsibility that public history and interpretation share in providing access to the history preserved in national park areas. Together the park historian and the park ranger collaborate to provide a variety of resource specific interpretive programs. Frequently these programs shape the park visitor experience; and, they provide a unique forum to share the Nation's history. Interpretation at its best is:

- guided by the most current scholarship;
  - provides intellectual access and insights into historic events from the “multiple points of view” of those involved;
  - offers opportunities for visitors to seek personal meaning and relevance through direct experiences with the park and its story and through the interpretive programs, media and services provided by the park; and
  - recognizes the visitor’s sovereign right to choose whether or not to participate in the programs and services provided -- as long as these independent activities are in compliance with park regulations.
- Utilize the currently funded VNMP positions of park historian and the supervisory park ranger for interpretation to support Pemberton’s Headquarters site program development. Clearly define which position is responsible for specific program needs at this site. Identify in performance standards who will have the responsibility to:
    - Launch the research program in support of the pre-identified park themes and will establish the on-site permanent archives and reference files according to Servicewide museum and curatorial standards;
    - Develop the interpretive program (this includes the program for the general public, school programs, and special events), training library and program guides for future staff and volunteers;

As a nation, we are still dealing with the impacts of racism. At Pemberton’s Headquarters in Vicksburg, MS it would be wise at this time and in this place to approach future interpretation as an ongoing and dynamic discussion infused with good scholarship. Interpretation at this site will grow and evolve reflecting an active program of ongoing research that continues behind the scenes and is shared with the public through the ongoing delivery and evaluation of the interpretive program.

- Communicate with key stakeholders regarding Pemberton’s Headquarters – or aspects of the the site’s program;
  - Develop new exhibits in collaboration with Harpers Ferry Center for the site;
  - Recruit, select, train and supervise the two Pemberton’s Headquarters interpretive positions to be funded (a GS-9 interpretive ranger and a GS 5 park guide).
  - Identify by position, which employee is responsible for coordinating with the park’s Chief of Operations to make decisions regarding operational coverage of Pemberton’s Headquarters when emergencies occur and staff resources are limited.
- Future Pemberton’s Headquarters Program and Product Ideas Discussed During Workshop**
- Develop a walking tour (could be staff or media led) from Pemberton’s Headquarters through downtown Vicksburg;
  - Develop living history programs on Reconstruction.
  - Develop theme specific pre/post visit pamphlets and post on park website on Vicksburg during the Reconstruction Era
  - Develop an interactive video-where visitors choose outcome of Vicksburg specific events during the Civil War and Reconstruction era.
  - Develop a downloadable audio/media program that includes the 1874 race riot testimonies
  - Mark and interpret sites of the race riot (3<sup>rd</sup> Louisiana Redan, off Cherry Street, at the Pemberton Monument, and on Grove Street Road)
  - Work with the park’s cooperating association to take Virginia DuBowy’s ground breaking publication “Glimpses of the African American Experience” to the next step. Request funding to have a published social history historian review and update the publication and provide additional Vicksburg specific material. In addition, request the Association to provide assistance with professional editing.

## Work Plan for Pemberton's Headquarters

### *1 – 3<sup>rd</sup> year: Program Planning and Development*

- Utilize the historian and supervisory park interpretive ranger positions for program research and operations and exhibit planning and implementation
- Conduct research to support new interpretive themes, future programs, exhibits and partnerships that support the delivery of the interpretive program
- Continue community dialogue and planning for site opening and provide special interpretive programs or events on a limited basis so local Vicksburgers can see continued progress towards future opening of the site.
- Implement a modest visiting speakers program with guest speakers on topics related to the park civilian themes 5 - 7
- Oversee development of phase 1 exhibits (planned by a design/build firm) for opening.
- Recruit, hire and train staff and volunteers to conduct interpretive and educational programs, and guided walks.
- Work with the park's cooperating association to take Virginia DuBow's ground breaking publication "Glimpses of the African American Experience" to the next step. Request funding

to have a published social history historian review and update the publication and provide additional Vicksburg specific material. In addition, request the Association to provide assistance with professional editing.

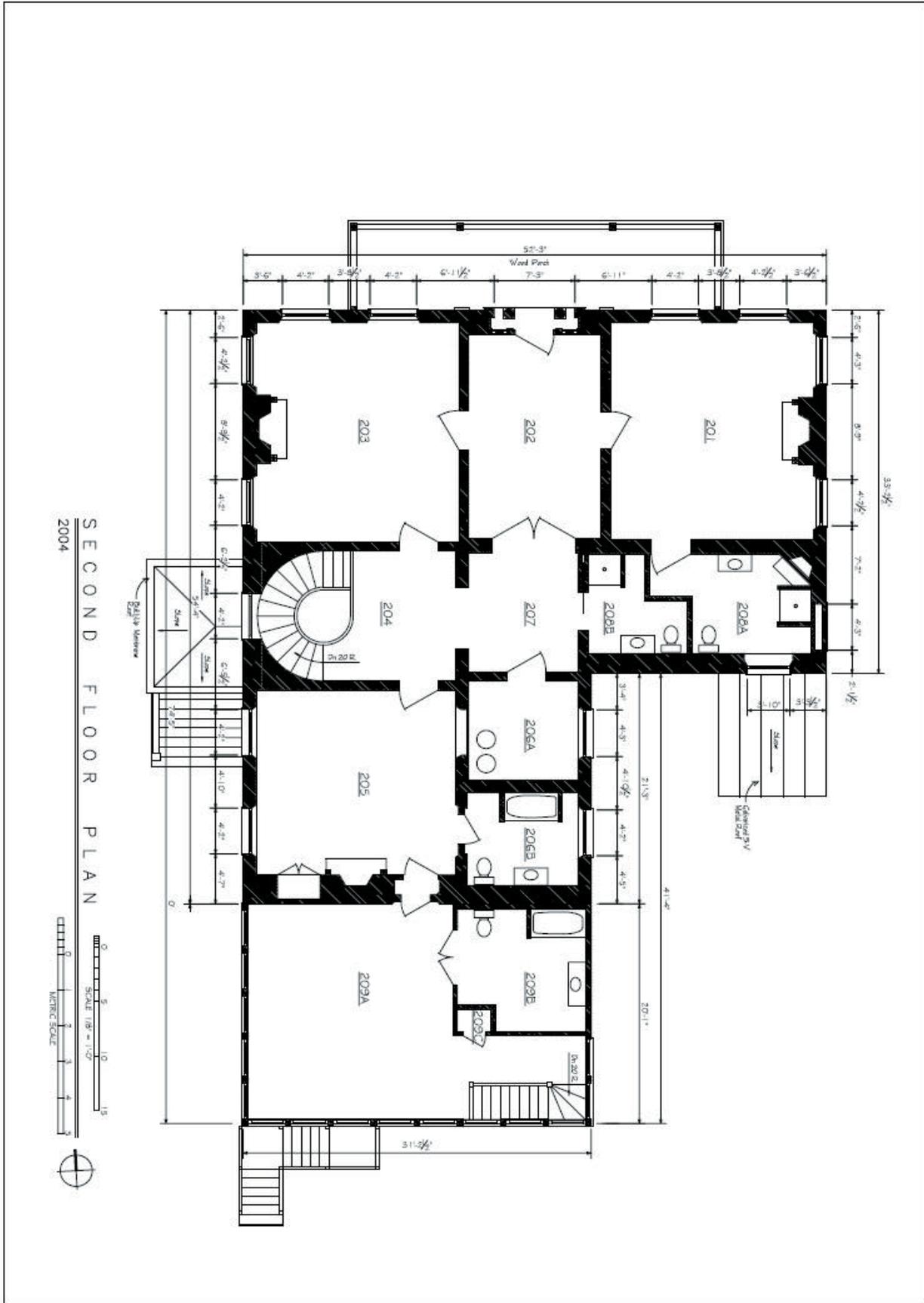
### *Years 4 – 6: Program Goal Open Pemberton as a seven-day per week visitor facility.*

- Pilot program and exhibits. This should be a period of great experimentation due to new information acquired through the ongoing research program and the attraction of new audiences to the park.
- Conduct annual program evaluations at Pemberton's Headquarters; use a variety of methods and seek feedback from the park's diverse partners, scholars and visitor groups.
- Seek funding to upgrade exhibits in light of visitor feedback and summative evaluation.

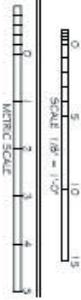
### *Years 7 – 10:*

- Partnership programs are fully in place.
- Exhibit redesign is underway.
- Sponsor with partners and scholars: a lessons learned symposium on "Interpreting Vicksburg, MS During Its Reconstruction Years"
- Continue to work with partners to promote the park and support its values





SECOND FLOOR PLAN  
2004



JOB #	0403
DATE	02-28-05
DRAWN BY	DCS
REVISIONS	
2ND FLOOR PLAN 2004	
SHEET #	C.2

PEMBERTON HEADQUARTERS  
VICKSBURG, MISSISSIPPI

JOSEPH K. OPPERMANN - ARCHITECT  
WINSTON-SALEM, NORTH CAROLINA

## APPENDICES

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### Appendix A: Vicksburg National Military Park Parkwide Implementation Plan

The planning team discussed and identified important future programs and projects to undertake during the next 3-4-years as first steps. Some program expansion can occur within existing staff and funding levels; other recommendations require the addition of new interpretive positions and/or project funding. During the park's annual strategic planning process, the Supervisory Park Ranger for Interpretation will work with the Chief of Operations, the Superintendent and other staff members to implement program goals and outcomes to achieve Long-Range Interpretive Plan recommendations.

#### Personal Services

- Update Interpretive Program Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)
- Update park seasonal training to reflect SOPs, new research and program goals
- Continue to seek funding increase to operate Pemberton's Headquarters and fund other vacant interpretation and visitor services positions
- Improve recruitment efforts for Living History Program student volunteers
- Develop an annual "Special Event Program." Include all special program dates, walks, etc.
- Offer off-season programs and guided walks
- Review the VNMP Junior Ranger program and incorporate changes in a revised Junior Ranger Program Booklet

## Interpretive Media

- Support development and review of new orientation film
- Seek cost-estimates for all media projects from HFC, work with assigned HFC Project Manager to develop a strategy for implementation:

### First priorities:

- Plan and construct new wayfinding signage, exhibits, and waysides for Pemberton's Headquarters.
- Develop waysides, wayfinding, VNMP Unigridd publication and partner products to support implementation of new battlefield tour route.
- Note: during VNMP Unigridd brochure development, consult with HFC and discuss development and scheduling of a separate Pemberton's Headquarters brochure to deal with unique site interpretive needs
- Continue to work on improvements needed (short-term fixes for the current visitor center: seating, improved accessibility to electronic map, and diorama audio programs).
- Review short-term exhibit improvements at the *U.S.S. Cairo* site, develop priorities to address during second phase of needed improvements

### Second Priorities

- Address exhibit needs at the *U.S.S. Cairo* and *U.S.S. Cairo Museum*
- Develop funding request to support long-term replacement of exhibits for the visitor center, the *U.S.S. Cairo*, and the *U.S.S. Cairo Museum*; and any needed modifications to exhibits in Pemberton's Headquarters.
- Seek funding to support the development of a new exhibit video on the discovery and recovery of the *U.S.S. Cairo*
- Continue to seek support and funding to enclose the *U.S.S. Cairo* gunboat exhibit.
- New product for in-house use: develop in house an "On This Day" interpretive training guide and share with partners and licensed guides.
- Review website and keep current.
- Improve bulletin board presentation; consult with HFC if technical assistance is needed.

## Partnerships

- Review VIP program needs; following assessment develop strategy to expand the program to a year-round program. Address in program revision recruitment, training, supervision and awards.
- Seek funding to support the development of trailer pads to support a residential volunteer program. An approved site is available.
- Work with community contacts to look at local housing opportunities for seasonals.
- Revitalize Licensed Battlefield Guide Program
- Work with local tourism and hotel industry to promote VNMP. Explore opportunity to develop a short promotional video on the park for use at hotels, casinos, etc.
- Explore opportunities to develop stipends or scholarships for students related to their successful completion of park projects.
- Work with Old Court House staff to coordinate park sponsored interpretive programming efforts -- especially future new programs at Pemberton's Headquarters and programs related to Reconstruction themes.

## Appendix B: Cost-estimating Information for the Wayfinding Assessment and Master Plan

The park has 16 miles of battlefield tour road – wayfinding along the tour route is a critical element of a future assessment. Other park features include a visitor center, fee booth operations, the historic *U.S.S. Cairo* Exhibit (a surviving gunboat), the *U.S.S. Cairo* Museum, the Vicksburg Military Cemetery, park headquarters and a maintenance yard located within the historic battlefield area.

### The park has five satellite sites:

- Four sites are located in downtown Vicksburg including: Louisiana Circle, Navy Circle, South Fort and Pemberton’s Headquarters’.
- Grant’s Canal is located across the Mississippi River in Louisiana; and would also include an assessment of wayfinding needs for the proposed Vicksburg Campaign Trail.
- The VNMP wayfinding assessment could also include the proposed Vicksburg Campaign Trail, if the legislative study now underway articulates a clear and consolidated route with recommended points of interest to identify; or, if the park and their partners have come to a clear consensus regarding the designated campaign route and significant features.

The future wayfinding assessment would focus solely on recommendations that dealt with wayfinding and site identification.

### Additional Vicksburg Campaign Trail Resource Information

A legislative study now underway explores the possibility of establishing a Vicksburg Campaign Trail that will link key Civil War sites located in Louisiana and Mississippi following the Union Army’s 9-month campaign (October 1862 – July 4, 1863) to gain control of the Mississippi River by capturing the Confederate Army’s primary remaining fortress along the river in the community of Vicksburg, MS.

While this legislation may not come to fruition the park may partner with state and local agencies and private landowners to designate this historic campaign route. Future partnerships may seek funding to:

- establish a sign system to mark and interpret the campaign trail -- so interested visitors can follow it; and, in addition
- establish a series of commemorative interpretive waysides to help visitors understand what happened along major points of the Vicksburg Campaign Trail from the Union and Confederate perspectives.

A future commemorative campaign trail would begin with the Union Army's advance from Jackson, Tennessee when General Grant takes command of the Federal forces in October 1862 and follow the advancing Federal Troops and defending Confederate forces through Louisiana and Mississippi until the siege at Vicksburg begins on May 18, 1863. The future wayfinding assessment would focus solely on recommendations that dealt with wayfinding and site identification. (Future in depth interpretation along this trail could proceed under a separate wayside exhibit plan.)

It should be noted that many of the signs that need to be established or replaced are along state, county and city road corridors which require coordination between park and local officials. The master plan will define individual sign standards and enable park staff to develop sound cost estimates for replacement from the HFC contractor.

## Appendix C: Bulletin Boards Visual Quality, Content and Ongoing Maintenance

The bulletin boards now seen at Vicksburg are visually crowded with too much complex information. Although the park staff should get high marks for having visually organized their bulletin board materials far better than most other units of the National Park Service, there is just too much material being broadcast for an outdoor reading platform. Studies reveal that most visitors will only spend 30 seconds at any bulletin board. Topics that work best at arrival area bulletin boards should be limited to general orientation, concise safety information, and experience choices. Complex topics that require multiple maps that are not germane to the immediate locale, such as the history of the Vicksburg Campaign, are not the best use of the visual real estate of a bulletin board.

Fonts, letter spacing, and type sizes for materials on bulletin boards should follow NPS wayside standards to comply with ADA legibility requirements — and to communicate concisely and effectively. For guidance on legibility, park staff can download the latest version of *Wayside Exhibit Typographic Standards* (.pdf-format file) from this website: <http://www.nps.gov/hfc/products/waysides/way-pdfs.htm>

To be kept looking good, bulletin boards have to have regular staff attention and fresh reprints. Any materials printed on office paper will look shabby after a matter of weeks when exposed to sunlight and changes in humidity. If the material needs to be seen for months, a better solution is to have the output created by a local print shop as a decal and applied to a thin sheet of opaque polystyrene or other plastic that can be thumb tacked. Any print shop that produces outdoor decals for advertising or banners should have the technical expertise to make what you need. Have the print shop make multiple copies so the park has back-ups ready when they are needed. Canaveral National Seashore has experimented with this solution for a number of years and found that a thin plastic sheet works much better than park-printed paper or cardstock in their intense sunlight and high humidity. Mississippi has similar heat, sun, and humidity conditions to deal with.

It is also to Vicksburg's staff's credit that they did not post their standard park brochure on their bulletin boards, as is seen in many NPS units coast to coast. The standard park brochure should never be employed on a park bulletin board, because brochure type is sized to be read at a distance to 18 inches— typical of a document held in the hands or placed on a desk. People read bulletin boards from 30 to 48 inches away. To be able to read these posted materials at that kind of distance, the type has to be made significantly larger, and the line length of the text blocks must be much shorter. Park brochures convey far too much content to read outdoors, and maps on brochures are too small for easy outdoor reading.

Park maps seen on NPS bulletin boards often fail to keep visitors well oriented. Why? Most maps created for documents follow the convention of placing north at the top of the paper. This map orientation can work outdoors — *only if the bulletin board also faces north*. But a north-up map creates confusion if the map does not match the orientation of the view seen. Maps for outdoor trailhead exhibits or bulletin boards cannot be universally oriented north-up like maps in a book, because trailheads often face east, south, or west. Testing shows that to communicate without confusing people, a map posted outdoors must match the view. Because of the serpentine character of the Vicksburg tour route, to meet the need to orient visitors using a complete series of new park-wide panels, the standard north-up map of the VICK brochure would have to be redesigned and produced in six new heading variations: east-up, southeast-up, south-up, southwest-up, west-up, and northwest-up. In each heading, labels have to be repositioned in the correct relationship to the points of interest and parallel to the bottom of the map.

Until new orientation exhibits are designed and produced for Vicksburg, one of the most important functions for the park's bulletin boards will continue to be answering the natural questions "*What is this place?*" and "*What can you do here?*" for newly arriving visitors. Until that need for basic orientation is met, people will skip over any deeper subject material. Studies show that realistically, no one will read the photocopied sections of the Code of Federal Regulations so often seen posted on so many NPS bulletin boards. Even if posting the regulations is legally required, the first bulletin boards seen upon arrival should not be loaded down with materials that we know—from experience—that visitors will ignore.

Why Bother with Bettering the Bulletin Boards? Investing staff time into making the bulletin boards look better is the quickest (and cheapest) thing that can be done to improve a visitor's overall impression of the park and its ability to communicate outdoors. HFC has set aside a small block of time each pay period for its wayside writers and designers to help parks improve outdoor media, free of charge. Vicksburg could get help shortening its bulletin board texts and honing the language of the titles, as well as improving the visual hierarchy of the layouts. Remember, using bulletin boards to reach visitors is not a one-time 'fire-and-forget' missile. Keeping the appearance organized and legible has to be a regularly assigned, reoccurring duty. An overcrowded, unkempt, or hastily done bulletin board, like unmaintained restrooms, leaves a lasting negative impression on arriving park visitors.

## Appendix D: HFC Media Specialists' Wayside Concept Proposal for Cost-estimating

The almost total absence of waysides on the historic landscape to interpret the scene for the public is starkly unique among the Civil War sites managed by the National Park Service.

Vicksburg National Military Park in 2008 is a somber landscape where monumentation reigns supreme, to the detriment of site-specific outdoor interpretation. Hundreds of memorials, monuments, statues, and metal unit-identification tablets are seen, liberally broadcast over those limited views left from the forest plantings of the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) days 70 years ago. But the bronze and iron tablets of yesteryear mainly provide information, not interpretation. There is limited effective storytelling, particularly considering the tolerances and visual tastes of today's audiences. Many tablets use all capital letters, crowded tightly together—difficult to read. All these factors set Vicksburg NMP up to function fairly well as a place for highly motivated visitors who come with deep background knowledge about the events that this famous site commemorates. The experience of touring the roads and monuments of Vicksburg today is the embodiment of “extra for experts.” First-time visitors and those who are only casually or lightly interested in the Civil War get little help to make visual sense out of the miles of roads and hundreds of tablets. Historic context and narration are available outdoors to visitors who pay for the CD audio tour or hire a licensed battlefield guide, or those who employ the newer GPS Ranger. But visitors who are not able or not willing to pay for extra interpretation, or who are not technologically savvy about GPS, will not receive the same degree of focus and connection with why this historic resource matters because there are no standard waysides available to visually get the job done.

Vicksburg shares with many other major Civil War battlefields the challenge of letting visitors see and understand the titanic scale of the struggle. There is no single place where a person can see the vast sweep of the entire landscape over which 110,000 men fought.

For people who are not military history buffs, it is tough today to make sense of the tactics and battlefield realities of Vicksburg 1863. Dense woods planted by the Civilian Conservation Corps to stop erosion have also stopped today's visitors from being able to look over the parapets of eight miles of earthworks and forts and see a gigantic, deadly ‘no-man's land.’ The tranquil and tangled woods seen today mask how terrible it would have been to have to summon the courage to charge up steep slopes into heavy gunfire. In only a few open zones can today's first-time visitor get an immediate, intuitive, visceral sense of the inherent danger and hopelessness of having to assault prepared defenses—going uphill for hundreds of yards with no cover. Vicksburg's managers' plan to take down more CCC-planted trees will make it easier for future visitors to more intuitively and instantly grasp—at a glance—the horror and wonder of this turning point in American history. More open battlefield vistas will make it easier for waysides in the future to effectively interpret this landscape.

## What is Needed?

Wayside exhibits serve NPS visitors best when they provide three key outdoor communication functions: site-specific orientation, site-specific interpretation, and agency identity. Waysides help visitors to see what can't be seen.

### Cast

What today's visitors to Vicksburg cannot see are the different people—civilian and military, pro-Union and pro-Confederate, officer and enlisted, immigrant and native-born— that would have been the actors in the complex drama of this besieged fortress city in 1862–63.

### Action

Battlefields make the most sense to general-knowledge visitors when waysides help them see the action that took place on the ground in front of them.

### Scale

For Vicksburg, the other significant visual element that is absolutely missing from the experience is the grand scale. Since so many of this battlefield's surviving views are foreshortened, there is a great need to remind visitors, at multiple points along their experience exploring this National Military Park, that this is a drama that was played out by a cast of thousands over a stage that stretched out for eight miles, not just the 200-300 yards of present-day clearing amid the woods that they can now see.

## Waysides Reinforce the Idea that “this is the place”

One of the most meaningful components of a visit to a historic site is the magical sense of being in the exact place where something important to American history really happened. Standing on the actual site matters to most people. A “virtual visit” is not enough. There really is no substitute for “being there.” Vicksburg does not have standard NPS waysides to reinforce and continually remind visitors that “this is the place.”

Waysides can give visitors both a “this is the place” message and a follow-up “why this matters” message. Since there are no trailhead waysides at VNMP, this “why-this-matters” function falls to the hundreds of marble monuments and memorials.

## Style, Hardware, and Presentation Communicate Subtle Messages

In the last 30 years, park visitors have become accustomed to a visually enriched, full-color presentation of information both inside museums and outside on the front country trails. The etched aluminum plaques once popular in battlefield parks were very durable. Today two-color aluminum plaques are generally considered too dull to attract and hold visitor attention. Two-color waysides' days as an effective wayside material ended when major newspapers in the United States converted from black-and-white to color. For today's audiences, the text-heavy, monochromatic wayside exhibits seen at Vicksburg are dense-looking and difficult to read. Studies reveal that in a world where most Americans suffer from information overload, any panel that looks like a lot of work to read will be skipped by a significant percentage of today's park visitors. Signs that are text-heavy often don't have an effective hierarchy among the visual elements. Readers cannot quickly find the key points of information most important to them.

## **Standardized waysides and signs reinforce National Park Service Identity**

Every unit of the National Park Service needs to ‘show the flag’ at the same time that we inform visitors what they can see and do at a particular NPS site. Waysides created by park staffs working with HFC use a standard service-wide design to quietly remind visitors that an NPS-preserved place is something of great value to our nation.

### **LRIP Wayside Exhibit Cost-Estimating Information**

#### **Vicksburg National Cemetery**

What to See and Do, upright wayside

Tour Route Orientation, upright wayside

How Does A Nation Remember? upright wayside

A commemorative landscape/ planning the cemetery, upright wayside

Where are the Confederates? upright wayside

United States Colored Troops, upright wayside

The Rostrum—its ceremonial use, upright wayside

African Americans & 4<sup>th</sup> of July early celebrations, upright wayside

Vicksburg Campaign perspective; VNC number of burials versus campaign lives lost Other stories to be identified, upright wayside

#### **Visitor Center Parking Lot**

What to See and Do, upright wayside

**Tour Route Orientation, upright wayside**

People of 1863 Vicksburg, upright wayside

This Week’s Activities, upright bulletin board

Seasonal Safety Info, upright bulletin board

#### ***U.S.S. Cairo* parking lot**

What to See and Do, upright wayside

Tour Route Orientation, upright wayside

Men of the Gunboat Navy, upright wayside

This Week’s Activities, upright bulletin board

Seasonal Safety Info, upright bulletin board

#### **Railroad Redoubt**

What to See and Do, upright wayside

Tour Route Orientation, upright wayside

This Week’s Activities, upright bulletin board

Seasonal Safety Info, upright bulletin board

#### **Pemberton’s HQ**

What to See and Do, upright wayside

Tour Route Orientation, upright wayside

Site-specific stories told, low-profile waysides

This Week’s Activities, upright bulletin board

## **At the Minor Portals**

### **Navy Circle**

What to See and Do, upright wayside  
 Tour Route Orientation, upright wayside  
 Site-specific stories told, low-profile waysides

### **South Fort**

What to See and Do, upright wayside  
 Tour Route Orientation, upright wayside  
 Site-specific stories told, low-profile waysides

### **Louisiana Circle**

What to See and Do, upright wayside  
 Tour Route Orientation, upright wayside  
 Site-specific stories told, low-profile waysides

### **Grant's Canal**

What to See and Do, upright wayside  
 Tour Route Orientation, upright wayside  
 Site-specific stories told, low-profile waysides

## **At the Mid-Tour Stops / Recreational Sites**

### **Former Visitor Center/Administrative Building**

What to See and Do, upright wayside  
 Tour Route Orientation, upright wayside  
 Seasonal Safety Info, upright bulletin board

### **2<sup>nd</sup> Texas Picnic Area**

What to See and Do, upright wayside  
 Tour Route Orientation, upright wayside  
 Seasonal Safety Info, upright bulletin board

### ***U.S.S. Cairo* Picnic Area**

What to See and Do, upright wayside  
 Tour Route Orientation, upright wayside  
 Seasonal Safety Info, upright bulletin board

## **At non-NPS / Partner Sites**

### **South Confederate Avenue, near Virginia Monument**

What to See and Do, upright wayside  
Tour Route Orientation, upright wayside  
Site-specific stories told, low-profile waysides

### **South Confederate Avenue, near junction with Indiana Avenue**

What to See and Do, upright wayside  
Tour Route Orientation, upright wayside  
Site-specific stories told, low-profile waysides

### **Old Court House Museum**

What to See and Do, upright wayside  
Tour Route Orientation, upright wayside  
Site-specific stories told, low-profile waysides

### **Cedar Hill Cemetery**

What to See and Do, upright wayside  
Tour Route Orientation, upright wayside  
Site-specific stories told, low-profile waysides

### **Mississippi River Front**

What to See and Do, upright wayside  
Tour Route Orientation, upright wayside  
Ram C.S.S Arkansas story, low-profile waysides  
Other site-specific stories, low-profile waysides

## Waysides along the Battlefield Tour Route

Potential Stories / Topics	Locations
• Role of the Union Artillery	Tour Stop 1: Battery De Golyer
• The Sole Survivor from the Civil War	Shirley House
• Northerners Who Owned Slaves	Shirley House
• What Historic Preservation Costs	Shirley House
• Mine Explosion – June 25 <sup>th</sup>	Tour Stop 3: 3 <sup>rd</sup> Louisiana Redan
• Ransom's Gun Path	Tour Stop 4
• Attack on the Stockade Redan	Tour Stop 5: Stockade Redan Attack
• Hardtack! Hardtack!	Tour Stop 5
• The Forlorn Hope	Tour Stop 5
• Grant: Master of the Moment	Grant's Headquarters
• Sherman: Uncle Billy Had His Doubts	Sherman's Circle
• Thayer's Approach	Tour Stop 6
• Army-Navy Cooperation	Tour Stop 7: Battery Selfridge
• Starting a National Cemetery	Tour Stop 8
• Postwar Reburials	Tour Stop 8
• Segregation Even in Death	Tour Stop 8
• Where Were the Confederates Buried?	Tour Stop 8
• The Bend in the River Changed	Tour Stop 9: Fort Hill
• Fort Hill	Tour Stop 9
• Union Gunboats Run Past Vicksburg	Tour Stop 9
• Defending Stockade Redan	Tour Stop 10
• The Generals Discuss Surrender	Pemberton Drive
• 30,000 Troops Besieged Inside Vicksburg	Tour Stop 11 * needs aerial art
• An Even Bigger Mining Tunnel	Tour Stop 11
• Pemberton: A Troubled Command	Pemberton Circle
• 2 <sup>nd</sup> Texas Lunette	Tour Stop 12
• Not Just a Typical Southern Town	Hebrew Cemetery
• Savage Counter-Attack Holds the Line	Tour Stop 13: Railroad Redoubt
• Only Rail Link to the Southwest	Tour Stop 13
• Isham Garrott's Temper	Tour Stop 14: Fort Garrott
• Union Approach Trenches	Tour Stop 14
• Hovey's Approach – Zigzag Trenches	Tour Stop 15
• Change in High Command	Tour Stop 15
• Withdraw or Surrender the Army?	Pemberton's Headquarters
• How Siege Warfare Impacted Civilians	Pemberton's Headquarters
• Pemberton: The Costs of Loyalty	Pemberton's Headquarters
• Navy Circle	South Washington Street
• South Fort	South Washington Street
• Louisiana Circle	South Washington Street
• The First Canal: 1862	Grant's Canal ( <i>improve and re-site</i> )
• Grant Digs to Bypass Vicksburg:	1863 Grant's Canal ( <i>improve and update</i> )
• What the Battle at Milliken's Bend Proved	Grant's Canal ( <i>rework and re-site</i> )

This long preliminary list of interpretive wayside possibilities reveals that comprehensive waysides planning for Vicksburg NMP will be a major undertaking. Each potential site where visitors are exploring a view that has a significant hidden story embedded in it will have to be visited, discussed, and analyzed by a wayside planning team. Some sites have more story or aspects of a story than will fit on a single wayside, and choices will need to be developed for how to meet those challenges. Shirley's present-day wayside is a good example of a site where there it would be more effective interpretively to divide the subject matter now presented in a single panel into two or more waysides in the future.

## Appendix E: VNMP Visitor Center Long-term Exhibit Recommendations

An HFC Exhibit Designer participated in the Long-Range Interpretive Plan Recommendations Workshop. The following recommendations are based on workshop discussions and criteria outlined by park staff. These recommendations can be used to inform a future PMIS request to plan, design and construct new exhibits for the visitor center.

The visitor center should provide basic services, welcome and orient visitors, and present a concise overview of what happened at Vicksburg, why it happened, and its significance. The VC should be the starting point for most visitors, and may also be the ending point. While an important tool to understanding the park, the VC experience cannot be structured so that it captures too much of a visitor's time and short-changes the primary park experiences on and around the battlefield. The physical organization of the visitor center space should be consistent with these functions.

### Basic Services

In addition to restrooms, the VC is one place where they can be sure they can always contact a ranger for any questions or problems. It should also be a staging point for arranging and coordinating tours with licensed guides, and to pick up and return devices for audio and GPS Ranger tours. The bookstore is also an essential service to be housed in the visitor center and will continue to require a significant part of the space.

Over the next 10 years, some of these services may change and require more, less, or different VC involvement. For example, electronic tour devices that are checked out from the VC may be replaced by later generations of personally owned cell phones, blackberry/smart phones, and other GPS enabled devices. This would eliminate the cost and operational requirements for dedicated electronic tour devices at the park.

Reliance on profits from the bookstore to fund park programs is likely to grow, so an adequately sized, attractive, and well stocked store remains an essential component. There should be a clear separation of the store from the other functions of the VC. This could be accomplished either physically with partitions, or by moving sales into the current exhibit room. Another approach would be to keep the bookstore approximately in its current location, but use different colors, materials, lighting, etc. to better distinguish the sales area from the orientation lobby.

### Visitor Orientation

While personal services provide the most flexibility in delivering visitor orientation, a self-service orientation area should also be available to assist visitors. This area should be in close proximity to the information desk, clearly visible upon entering the building, and attractively designed and organized. Elements may include a park map accompanied by photographs and descriptions of significant features; a display on how to read the battlefield; an interactive kiosk or exhibit panels highlighting suggested itineraries for those with different interests, and racks for displaying site bulletins and other related publications. Additionally, basic orientation information could also be provided in the breezeway outside of the building to increase capacity for information dissemination on busy days.

## Interpretation

The goal of interpretive media at the visitor center should be to quickly provide a broad overview of the park's story and significance. The media should provide enough varied experiences to reach a broad and diverse audience and whet visitors' appetite to further explore the park. Interpretive media in and around the visitor center can be divided into five distinct but complimentary components: the park film, the battle map, permanent interior exhibits, temporary exhibit area, and exterior exhibits.

The new park film, presented in the existing auditorium, should provide a quick introduction to the Vicksburg campaign, battle and siege, how it impacted the participants, its aftermath, and significance. The film is the best tool for emotionally connecting visitors to the story; it should be designed to reach both visitors with little or no previous understanding, as well as help other visitors bring to life events that they may already be familiar with.

While often having less emotional impact than a film, exhibits allow visitors to explore at their own pace and pick and choose the content that is most meaningful to them. The visitor center exhibits can be most effective by focusing on two major topics: the importance to the Union of capturing Vicksburg, and the broad context of the Civil War. The North's strategy included controlling the Mississippi River to deny its use to the South, thereby splitting the Confederacy and preventing access to supplies from the West. This is the "Big Idea" that all visitors need to understand in order to appreciate the battle and siege tactics that were employed. The VC exhibit is also an excellent location for introducing the Servicewide "Holding the High Ground" themes by providing an overview of the war's causes, how it changed as it progressed, slavery and emancipation, and the lasting effects on women in American society. Once these overarching concepts are understood, there are many other opportunities throughout the park for visitors to understand the specific details of how the events at Vicksburg unfolded.

Viewing either the film or the permanent exhibits should give visitors enough basic background information to begin to appreciate the resources they will encounter throughout the park.

A temporary exhibit area should continue to be an element of the visitor center. The area should contain a professionally designed, flexible system for mounting exhibit graphics and objects and have its own lighting system. A standard template for temporary graphic labels and panels should be developed so that new exhibit content has a consistent appearance and can be easily prepared either in-house or by a local graphic design and production company.

Battle maps and other descriptions of troop movements are traditionally an important element of exhibits at a battlefield park. For students of military history, they are invaluable. For the more casual visitor, they can also be a useful even if some of the details are not completely understood. As long as it is in good condition and updated to meet accessibility requirements, Vicksburg's recently completed fiber optic map should remain as an element of any new exhibit installation planned for the visitor center over the next ten years. If new exhibits are delayed beyond that time, a new battle map should be considered as part of the project to take advantage of any new technologies that are available at that time.

Typical of most map programs, the nature and complexity of the information being conveyed requires careful attention on the part of the visitor. For this reason, it is recommended that the battle map be separate from the main exhibit area, enclosed within an acoustically treated mini-theater with seating and controlled lighting. This will provide a better environment for the visitor to focus on the content.

Actual layout of the interior of the visitor center is beyond the scope of this report. Major changes that have been proposed include switching locations of the exhibit room and bookstore, and eliminating the central stairwell in the center of the VC. The feasibility and desirability of these options requires additional study. When a major VC exhibit rehab project is initiated, all options should be explored for most effective use of the space.

An additional opportunity for exhibits could be developed outside of the visitor center in proximity to the living history display area. A recreated cave or shebang would make an extremely effective display. Safety and security issues need to be resolved but, ideally, visitors should have the opportunity to enter the excavated structures.

## Appendix F: Proposed Soundscape for U.S.S. Cairo Museum Vicksburg National Military Park

### Interpretive Purpose:

To add a memorable auditory dimension to the existing visual display of *U.S.S. Cairo* artifacts with a low-volume, continuous background of typical sounds heard aboard an 1862 Union gunboat.

Such a soundscape would serve to remind visitors that the *U.S.S. Cairo* was not a silent tomb-like space, but a riverboat full of the constant noise of heavy steam machinery, and the busy home of 175 sailors. Visitors could compare and contrast the subtle sounds of the gunboat to their prior experiences of being aboard large modern vessels.

### Location(s):

Primary location would be inside the existing *U.S.S. Cairo* museum space. If enough funding were found, an excellent secondary location for playback would be outdoors inside the actual *U.S.S. Cairo* itself. The audio files might also reside on the park's web pages that inform virtual visitors about the *U.S.S. Cairo*. This recording may have some sales potential.

### Challenges Foreseen

**Staff Tolerance** — Experience in other museum settings where soundscapes are continuously played in the background reveals that most visitors enjoy this interpretive input, but the staff working daily near the exhibit area often finds the repetitive sounds irksome. This can be minimized having the option of turning the soundscape off if no visitors are present, or if there is a staff personal interpretive program to be given.

**Historical Research & Reviews** — Staff time and effort would be required to determine what sounds would have been heard aboard the *U.S.S. Cairo* while this warship was underway, or at anchor, or docked during loading and unloading. Vicksburg staff would have to locate and network with people knowledgeable about daily practices of the 1862 western rivers Navy to determine authenticity of the proposed audio content.

### Content

The minimal content and main organizing principle for this proposed *U.S.S. Cairo* soundscape is the naval tradition of sounding the ship's bell to tell time during each 4-hour-long watch. Ships' bells are struck in a distinct pattern of sets of two tones played close together followed by a slight pause, from one to eight bells. Visitors would hear on the hour and half hour, all during the museum's hours of operation, the correct number of bells telling the time aboard the *U.S.S. Cairo*.

The next most basic layer of predictable timed sound effects would be feet of many sailors moving during the change of watches to take up their duties, accompanied by the murmuring of voices, and jangling of equipment. Watches aboard a United States warship change at midnight, 04:00, 08:00, 12:00, 16:00, 18:00, and 20:00. The pattern of 4-hour watches is broken every afternoon by two 2-hour watches, called the "dog watches," (4p–6p, 6p–8p) where the maximum number of bells struck is only four.

The next layer of continual sounds would be the constant rumble and chuff of steam machinery, the repetitive scrape of shovels as the stokers fed the boilers, the creaking of timbers as the vessel shifts in motion, and moving water lapping alongside the strakes.

Adding more layers of intermittent and unpredictable sounds could increase the imaginative impact of being aboard the *U.S.S. Cairo*: the shrill of bosuns' pipes, the pacing of officers along the decks, the sounds of blocks-and-tackle as heavy weights are being moved by the crew, the clatter of cups, bowls, and cutlery during meals, and the deep-throated whistles of other riverboats passing near and far.

To avoid the NPS museum staff hearing the exact same soundtrack day in and day out, different sound scenarios could be overlaid over the foundation of bells and watch changes. Digital audio software makes this kind of timed and variable output mix and match possible in a way that could not have been done a few years ago with tape players or CDs.

One imaginable scenario would be the sounds of the *U.S.S. Cairo* underway on the rivers. Another would be a day where the *U.S.S. Cairo* is anchored in midstream, the decks are being scrubbed down, and engine maintenance is being done. A third scenario would be a block of hours where the warship is docked and being loaded or unloaded. Research and consultation with naval subject matter experts may reveal even more seasonal sounds that could be switched on or off appropriately.

### **Caveat**

Recognizable voices reading scripts may turn out to be problematic in the long run. The soundscape should remain a subtle background element, not become a platform for a radio show-like play that would include characters and plot development to project its interpretive themes and messages.

A known problem is that regional accents during the Civil War are often assumed to be the same as today, but most likely were not. The way people speak changes over time. Any modern recording purporting to be the crew and officers of the *U.S.S. Cairo* speaking would be 100% conjecture. The earliest sound files recording American accents in speech date after Edison's invention of sound-recording equipment in the late 1870s. What passes today for an acceptable regional accent can sound contrived, corny, or just plain wrong in the next 20 years. This has already occurred in several NPS historic sites where audio scripts were produced for waysides in the 1970s using heavy accents to indicate speakers from different parts of the United States.

Cost estimate FY08 (please check with HFC to update costs before developing a PMIS request): \$5,000–10,000 for organizing, locating, developing, and recording audio content. Typical charges for each "needle drop" for existing sound effects is \$50. Sounds that have to be recreated cost more. Studio time can be \$500–700 per day, with a half-day minimum.

### **Resource people consulted:**

Michele Hartley/HFC, Audiovisual Producer, 304-535-6083

## Potential Sound Effects Sources

*U.S.S. Cairo*'s ship's bell — the prime authentic sound producer for this soundscape already exists on display in the museum space. By installing a simple timer, solenoid, and electrical clapper, the bells for the watches could be rung in the *U.S.S. Cairo* museum at very minimal expense. Curators should determine first if repeated ringing of the original bronze and iron bell might damage the artifact. If so, the bell could be moved outdoors (briefly) and recorded for the most historic sound of all for the *U.S.S. Cairo*.

Steamboats.org — this website posts MP3 digital recordings of the steam whistles of many 20<sup>th</sup>-century riverboats. This group may have other audio files available.

Delta Queen — this historic wooden paddle wheeler, operated by the Majestic America Line, will cease passenger-carrying operations at the end of the 2008 tour season. The operating company may have sound recordings of the machinery, or may be willing to have recording of the last voyages of the Queen made.

United States Naval Academy Museum — A valuable resource contact is J. Scott Harmon, Museum Director and Associate Professor of History, [jsharmon@usna.edu](mailto:jsharmon@usna.edu) 410-293-6250. Scott Harmon was an HFC museum planner for many, many years.

Harpers Ferry Center AV Library — HFC has an extensive library of sound effects that could be put to use free of charge. This resource was used in earlier decades for interpretive audio productions.

### Resource people to contact:

Eric Epstein/HFC Supervisory AV Production Specialist, 304-535-6476

Mary Ann Kave/HFC, Audiovisual Producer, 304-535-6478

## Hardware

This soundscape can be created very simply indoors or on a more dramatic, complex scale outdoors. The cost of the hardware to regulate and produce the sounds will depend on how many sounds the design and planning team determines are enough to intrigue visitors and accurately represent an auditory historical facsimile. An ideal speaker playback design solution would be a 16-to-24-channel system for the outdoors, with many separate speakers arranged around the *U.S.S. Cairo* as unique sound sources, including subwoofers capable of very low-frequency sound transmission in the engine compartment, and speakers under the walkways visitors now use to explore the gunboat to simulate the passage of the officers and petty officers in their duties.

All sound recordings will be digital files that require playback equipment with no moving parts, which is a boon for long-term maintenance and less vulnerable to high heat and humidity. An off-the-shelf Macintosh computer could organize and run the sound files in the correct time sequence using commercially available audio-mixing software.

Cost estimate FY08 (please check with HFC to update costs before developing a PMIS request):  
*\$500–\$15,000 for hardware to play content. Minimal needs would be an amplifier (~\$200) and speakers (~\$200 each) for the interior museum spaces. The soundscape project could be dynamic, starting small and expanding from just being inside the museum exhibit area to the outdoor space over several years.*

**Resource people consulted:**

Ed Boutte/HFC, Supervisory Electronics Technician, 304-535-6124

**Sound System Controls**

In addition to the keyboard and monitor needed for sound mixing control, AV production specialists recommended that at least two remote “kill” switches and/or volume controls be included in the planning. These switches would allow interpreters to mute the background sounds either in the museum, or outside near the actual *U.S.S. Cairo* during times that interpretive talks and tours are to be given.

**Partnership Cost-Sharing Opportunity**

Costs to design and create a soundscape for the *U.S.S. Cairo* may be significantly reduced if the NPS would seek a partnership with a local university that has an audiovisual arts department, a local PBS station with a production sound recordist on staff, or the Mississippi state film office. PBS stations along the Mississippi River, in particular, may have what are called “wild sound” recordings that could advance the authenticity of this future interpretive tool.

Sample Bell Schedule

8:00	8 bells	Sounds of men on the move as the watch changes
8:30	1 bell	
9:00	2 bells	
9:30	3 bells	
10:00	4 bells	(08:00-11:59 is called the FORENOON WATCH)
10:30	5 bells	
11:00	6 bells	
11:30	7 bells	
12:00	8 bells	Sounds of men on the move as the watch changes
12:30	1 bell	
13:00	2 bells	
13:30	3 bells	
14:00	4 bells	(12:00-15:59 is called the AFTERNOON WATCH)
14:30	5 bells	
15:00	6 bells	
15:30	7 bells	
16:00	8 bells	Sounds of men on the move as the watch changes
16:30	1 bell	The men who are off watch eat dinner during this period.
17:00	2 bells	(16:00-17:59 is called the FIRST DOG WATCH)
17:30	3 bells	
18:00	4 bells	Sounds of men on the move as the watch changes
18:30	1 bell	The other half of the crew now eats dinner.
19:00	2 bells	(18:00-19:59 is called the SECOND DOG WATCH)
19:30	3 bells	
20:00	4 bells	Sounds of men on the move as the watch changes
20:30	1 bell	
21:00	2 bells	
21:30	3 bells	(20:00-23:59 is called the FIRST WATCH)
22:00	4 bells	
22:30	5 bells	
23:00	6 bells	
23:30	7 bells	
0:00	8 bells	Sounds of men on the move as the watch changes
0:30	1 bell	
1:00	2 bells	(00:00-03:59 is called the MIDDLE WATCH)
1:30	3 bells	
2:00	4 bells	

**Appendix F developed by:**  
 Mark W Johnson, Wayside Exhibit Planner  
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## Appendix G: Accessibility

Every attempt will be made to promote full access to interpretive media and programs to ensure that people with physical and mental disabilities have access to the same information necessary for safe and meaningful visits to national parks. This is in compliance with the National Park Service policy:

**“ . . .To provide the highest level of accessibility possible and feasible for persons with visual, hearing, mobility, and mental impairments, consistent with the obligation to conserve park resources and preserve the qualities of the park experience for everyone.”**

NPS Special Directive 83-3, Accessibility for Disabled Persons

All interpretation will follow general standards for accessibility as described in the Harpers Ferry Center Programmatic Accessibility Guidelines for Interpretive Media.

## Appendix H: References

### Park Documents

- **Park Legislation:**
- Establishment Act, February 21, 1899
- Memorial Archway, July 11, 1919
- Rights-of-Way, Vicksburg Bridge and Terminal Company, March 15, 1928
- Warren County Granted Easement for Public Highway Access, April 20, 1928
- Donation of Lands, October 9, 1940
- Exchange of Land, August 14, 1958
- Consolidate Vicksburg National Military for Installation of Park Tour Road, June 4, 1963
- Restoration, Reconstruction, and Exhibition of the gunboat, “*U.S.S. Cairo*”, October 12, 1972
- Park Expansion to include Grant’s Canal and expansion of park themes to include the Reconstruction Era, May 18, 1990
- Park Expansion to include Pemberton’s Headquarters, October 11, 2002

“Vicksburg National Military Park Cultural Landscape Report”, Wiss, Janney, Elstner Associates, Inc and John Milner Associates, Inc for the National Park Service, June 2009.

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“State of the Parks: Vicksburg National Military Park”, National Parks Conservation Association, 2008.

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“Concepts for Future Use and Treatment of Pemberton’s Headquarters”, Vicksburg National Military Park, March 23, 2006.

“Glimpses of the African American Experience”, Virginia DuBow, Vicksburg National Military Park, June 2004; revised October 2006.

## National Park Service Documents

2001 National Park Service Management Policies

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Director's Order No. 28: Cultural Resource Management Guideline

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"2006 Interpretation and Education Renaissance Action Plan", National Park Service. Scholars Forum: The National Park Service and Civic Reflection, A Summary Report. Conservation and Stewardship Publication No. 13, 2006; NPS Conservation Study Institute.

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Reconstruction: America's Unfinished Revolution, 1863 – 1877, Eric Foner; HarperCollins Publishers, 2002.

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Mrs. Balfour's Civil War Diary; edited by Gordon A. Cotton; Old Court House Museum; Vicksburg, MS.

Angels of Mercy; Sister Ignatius Sumner, R.S.M. Cathedral Foundation Press, Baltimore, MD, 2000.

## **Appendix I: Planning Team**

### **Vicksburg National Military Park Staff**

Matt Atkinson, former VNMP Park Ranger, now working at Gettysburg National Military Park

John Bundy, Acting Superintendent

Virginia DuBow, Natural Resource Manager

Ray Hamel, Park Ranger

Elizabeth Joyner, Curator

Dwight Johnson, Graduate Student Intern

Tim Kavanaugh, Supervisory Park Ranger for Interpretation and Visitor Services

Rick Martin, Chief of Operations

Monika Mayr, former Superintendent, now Blue Ridge Parkway Deputy Superintendent

David Slay, Park Ranger

Robbie Smith, former VNMP Ranger, now at Yorktown Battlefield, Colonial National Historical Park

Terrence Winschel, Historian

### **Park Partners**

Ser Seshs Boxley, Forks of the Road Society, Inc.

Dr. Michael B. Ballard, Mississippi State University

Norman Fisher, park friend, “United States Colored Troops” reenactor

Dr. Warren Grabau, Friends of Raymond Battlefield

Gary D. Joiner, Louisiana State University

Dr. William Parrish, Mississippi State University, retired

Pat Strange, Vicksburg Visitor Convention Bureau and Visitors Bureau

William Thompson, Mississippi Department of Archives and History

Dr. Chris Waldrep, San Francisco State University

### **National Park Service Consultants**

John Beck, Southeast Region Interpretive Planner, retired

Don Branch, Harpers Ferry Center (HFC), Senior Exhibit Designer

Katherine Brock, former HFC Interpretive Planner, now working at Jimmy Carter NHS

Bob Clark, Harpers Ferry Center, Servicewide Sign Program Manager

Melissa Cronyn, Harpers Ferry Center Associate Manager for Publications

Nancy Haack, Harpers Ferry Center Cartographer, Publications

David Guiney, Harpers Ferry Center, Interpretive Media Specialist

Sarah Heald, Harpers Ferry Center, Historic Furnishings Specialist

Mark Johnson, Harpers Ferry Center, Wayside Exhibit Specialist

Mary Mallen, Harpers Ferry Center, Interpretive Planner-Park Ranger

Sam Vaughn, Harpers Ferry Center, Associate Manager for Interpretive Planning

Sandy Weber, Washington Office of Interpretation, Park Ranger-Historian

Don Wollenhaupt, Southeast Regional Chief of Interpretation



National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior  
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