



Community Bulletin



Remembering Senator Robert C. Byrd

On June 28, 2010, West Virginia lost perhaps its most dedicated public servant with the passing of U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd. Robert C. Byrd was first elected to the United States House of Representatives in 1952. After serving three terms in the House, he was elected to the Senate in 1958 and re-elected an unprecedented eight times. On June 12, 2006, Byrd became the longest-serving Senator in the nation's history and on November 18, 2009, the two-time majority leader became the longest-serving Congressman in history. Byrd's numerous elective triumphs helped him serve West Virginia well. Because a large part of a senator's effectiveness depends on committee assignments and seniority, throughout his long political career Senator Byrd was uniquely positioned to help his "Mountain State" constituents.

At the outset of his Senate career, Senator Byrd was rewarded by the Senate leadership with a seat on the prestigious Committee on Appropriations, one of the Senate's most important committees – an almost unheard of assignment for a freshman Senator. Byrd was a member of the Appropriations Committee for many years, serving as chairman from 1989 to 1995, from 2001 to 2003, and again from 2007 to 2009 – a fact of great signifi-

cance for the people and communities of West Virginia. He brought billions of federal dollars to the state, money used to build roads, bridges, buildings and other facilities and to create jobs and fund programs. This ability to attain funds and projects for his state led West Virginia Governor Joe Manchin to aptly dub Byrd the "Architect of Appalachia."

Certainly one benefactor of Byrd's great influence was Harpers Ferry National Historical Park. The following is a list of significant projects and special events, spanning more than four decades, made possible by Senator Byrd and his hard-working staff members.

1960s and 1970s

1966 – Supported establishment and construction of the Harpers Ferry Center/Interpretive Design Center to promote advanced media techniques



that enhance visitor experience at all National Parks. (pictured below right)

1972 – Co-sponsored legislation to raise the Park acreage limit from 1,350 to 2,346 acres and to acquire land to create a single Park entrance and parking area outside the historic area. Approved in 1974, the legislation allotted \$1.3 million for acquisition and \$8.69 million for development.

1972 - Supported funds to HAFE Park for flood/storm cleanup.

1976 – Funded restoration of seven historic buildings in the heart of the historic district, located at the intersection of Potomac and Shenandoah Streets, including the John Brown Museum.

1977 – Provided federal funding to help construct a new wastewater treatment plant to service the towns of Harpers Ferry and Bolivar, as well as the thousands of annual visitors to the Park. Prior to its construction, most of the historic area relied upon septic fields that were susceptible to frequent floods.

1978 – Supplied grant funding creating a joint Harpers Ferry-Bolivar police department.

1980s

According to former Park Superintendent Donald Campbell and Park Architect Peter Dessauer, throughout the 1980s Byrd provided on average \$2 - 3 million annually for restoration and preservation of the Park's natural and cultural resources, including funds for Machine Shop, Frankel Clothing Store, Restoration Exhibit, Black History Museum, Civil War Museum, Battle of Harpers Ferry Museum, and Burton Jewelry Shop.

1982 – Special guest during the dedication of the Shenandoah Street renovations and the John Brown Museum restoration.

1983 – Steered filming of Puddin' Head Wilson to Harpers Ferry NHP

1985 Opening of Pedestrian foot-bridge across the Potomac.

1987 – Obtained funding to document historic resources on Virginus Island.

1989 Obtained funding for Special Boundary Study

1990s

1990 – Dedication of the Robert C. Byrd Visitor Center at Cavalier Heights and transportation system.

1992 – Secured \$10 million to plan, design, and restore seven historic buildings on the south side of Shenandoah Street in Lower Town Harpers Ferry, including the Doran Store, the Samuel Annin House, and the Visitor Information Center in the Master Armorer's House.

1992 – Funded \$2 million restoration of four buildings on High and Potomac Streets, including the Frederick Roeder House and Annex, Frederick Roeder's Store, and the White Hall Tavern.

1992 – Secured funding for Historic American Buildings Survey documentation of the Philip Coons Building,



1981

Stagecoach Inn, Privy Annex, and Armorer Dwelling House #48.

1992 – Appropriated second phase of funding to document historic resources on Virginus Island.

1994 – Appropriated funds for Historic American Building Survey documentation for multiple buildings on Camp Hill, including the Lockwood House, Brackett House, and Morrell House.

1994 – Obtained third phase of funding to document historic resources on Virginus Island.

1994 – Senator Byrd and his wife, Erma, are honored guests at the celebration of the 50th anniversary of the founding of the Park.

1996 – Following two significant floods within nine months, directed \$5.1 million into the Flood/Storm Recovery Program, which provided relief aid over a period of five years to repair damages.

1997 – Senator Byrd presided over a ribbon cutting and was special guest speaker at the dedication of the restoration of Shenandoah Street buildings.

2000 - Present

2001 – Assisted in concluding negotiations with the CSX Corporation for exchange of properties for the NPS that included the historic U.S. Armory property, original site of John Brown's Fort.

2001 – Secured \$2 million to plan, design, and construct Park maintenance yard.

2003 – Secured funding to plan, compose, and publish the Park's General Management Plan.

2003 – Funded repairs of porches on the historic Harper House and Wager House, \$306K.

2004 – Sponsored legislation entitled "The Harpers Ferry National Historical Park Boundary Revision Act of 2004", that, in part, provided the authority to acquire, preserve, restore and promote the public use and enjoyment of hundreds of acres of the 1862 Harpers Ferry Battlefield.

2004 – Obtained \$2.5 million funding for the restoration of the Harpers Ferry Train Station.



Volunteer Program is a National Take Pride in America Award Winner

Harpers Ferry National Historical Park was recently notified it was selected as a 2010 Take Pride in America® National Award winner in the Federal Volunteer Program category. Recipients of the 2010 Take Pride in America National Awards will be honored at an awards ceremony held in Washington, D.C. on Friday, July 16, 2010.

“When a citizen agrees to share their talents, skills, and interest with their community, they are paying our nation one of the highest compliments possible by offering a most valued possession—their time,” said Lisa Young, Take Pride in America Director. “These award winners gave generously of their time in service to our public lands, and it is a privilege to be able to recognize them for their efforts.”

Each year, award winners are selected by a panel of judges from hundreds of qualified nominations representing outstanding examples of public lands stewardship from across the county. This year, there are 15 National Award winners, representing projects and events in 13 states and the District of Columbia.

Take Pride in America, is a nationwide partnership program authorized by Congress to promote the appreciation and stewardship of our nation’s public lands. The Take Pride in America program is administered by the U.S. Department of the Interior for the benefit of all public lands at all levels of government nationwide.

Harpers Ferry NHP was chosen for exceptional accomplishment in logging over 38,000 volunteer hours in 2009. Harpers Ferry NHP has a tremendous number and variety of volunteer opportunities. Program opportunities for 2009 included an Intern Program that offers college students intern positions in six different park disciplines;

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2006 – Secured \$2.5 million for restorations of the Philip Coons and John Wilson Buildings.

2006 – Provided \$300K to supplement Park’s programming for the Niagara Movement Centennial. Senator Byrd was among the distinguished guests and speakers.

2007 – Provided funding for the rehabilitation and renovation of the Jackson House for administrative archives space.

2009 – Secured \$2 million for land acquisition of Bolivar Heights and School House Ridge, enabling enhanced interpretation of these sites.

2009 – Obtained \$1.425 million for improvements to Potomac Street in downtown Harpers Ferry.

2009 – Provided \$300K to purchase reproduction cannons to better interpret the Harpers Ferry Battlefield.

2009 – Provided \$300K to supplement Park operations and programs for the John Brown Sesquicentennial Commemoration.

At Senator Byrd’s recent memorial services, his peers and government colleagues remarked on his devotion to

the U.S. Constitution, his intense passion for literature and history, and his legendary legislative and parliamentary skills. But most of all, they emphasized Byrd’s fierce commitment to his beloved West Virginia. Senator Byrd played an enormous role in the development of West Virginia in general, and Harpers Ferry National Historical Park in particular. His continued support quite literally made the Park what it is today.

On this occasion we pay tribute to the extraordinary life and career of the most important public servant in the history of West Virginia. May the many good works he helped make possible in our Park and communities long stand as a tribute to the late Senator Robert C. Byrd

Visit the Harpers Ferry Historical Association Bookshop on Shenandoah Street

You’ll find books, art, maps, posters, music tapes and CDs, historic photos, DVDs, games, puzzles, notecards, postcards and a terrific selection of children’s books!

<http://www.harpersferryhistory.org/>

extensive Living History Volunteer Program, just to name a few.

Retired folks and senior citizens, individuals and couples, are a very valuable part of the park's volunteer team. They work with various areas of park operations from hike leaders to visitor services. Local school students are involved in placed-based service learning projects where they can explore and discover history at their own pace on their own terms. Graduate students have a chance to study, research and preserve national resources. There is truly something for everyone. Harpers Ferry NHP has an existing list of volunteer opportunities and is discovering new ones all the time; which is exciting for the volunteers, park staff and visitors.

Anyone interested in volunteer opportunities at Harpers Ferry NHP should contact Volunteer Coordinator Jessica Liptak at 304-535-5017.



Harpers Ferry staff members accept Take Pride In America Federal Volunteer Award. Front row: (L to R) Steve Lowe, Dale Nisbet; Scott Fritz; Dennis Frye; Mark Walker (VIP) Back row: (L to R) Michelle Hammer; Amber Kraft; Bob Stanton, Senior Advisor to the Secretary, U.S. Department of the Interior; Jess Liptak; Catherine Bragaw; Autumn Cook; Graham Humphrey; Lisa Young, Director, Take Pride in America.

July's Volunteer of the Month: Baltimore Light Artillery

The Baltimore Light Artillery (BLA) is in its 25th season of bringing to life the daily workload of an artillery unit. The group debuted at Antietam National Battlefield in 1985 presenting regular programs three to four weekends a season. After a year of success, the Baltimore Light Artillery (BLA) was able to recruit a dozen more men into the unit. Ross Kimmel, former State Historian for the Maryland State Park System was very instrumental in forming this Confederate artillery detachment. Their uniforms were modeled after late war Richmond Depot uniforms as Kimmel was enamored with a surviving jacket worn by a member of the original unit.

In 1986, the BLA came to Harpers Ferry National Historical Park to participate in the first School House Ridge event, a program where 5th graders from Jefferson County come to learn about the history of the area.

Among their peers, the BLA is seen as one of the most authentic and safest units in the reenactor community. Their commitment to public history is



evident during their demonstrations. Their ranks are filled with modern day professionals of history - from the Smithsonian, to state museums as well as private. The BLA continues to set the standard bar high from their period clothing to their educational messages.

From Spring 1862 to October 1864, the BLA served in the Army of Northern Virginia. In 1864, the group lost its two last guns in Woodstock, VA when overrun by Custer's Cavalry covering Jubal Early's retreat up the valley. The remaining men were put into Confederate artillery or infantry units and served until the war ended.



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

The history of Harpers Ferry has few parallels in the American drama. It is more than one event, one date, or one individual. It is multi-layered, involving a diverse number of people and events, decisions and actions that influenced the course of our nation's history. Visit Harpers Ferry and step into history.

Harpers Ferry National Historical Park
P.O. Box 65
Harpers Ferry, West Virginia 25425

Visitor Center
304-535-6029

Harpers Ferry Historical Association Bookshop
304-535-6881

Harpers Ferry NHP Home Page
www.nps.gov/hafe/

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