



Independence: The Best Park in History

“Things Not to be Found in Books”*

When National Park Service architects began the work of restoring Independence Hall in 1951, they were embarking upon a new course of their discipline, “forensic architecture.” In order to decipher the puzzle of the structure’s stages of construction, repairs, and replacements, they required documented prototypes for comparative study. The resourceful researchers launched the park’s architectural study collection.



During Independence’s early years, some of Philadelphia’s oldest residences were condemned to make way for I-95, the redevelopment of Society Hill was underway, and within park boundaries, the majority of structures were slated for removal. These upheavals created a veritable open season on vernacular architecture. Pioneering park architects, most notably Penny Batcheler and Lee Nelson, amassed a significant collection of interior and exterior architectural elements. Their useful lives as shelters ended, these fragments began new careers instructing generations in the mysteries of the building trades.



INDE Cultural Resource Management Staff and Volunteers review the collection

Independence’s architectural study collection now numbers several thousand specimens from tiny paint samples to portions of entire structures. Particularly rich in urban Delaware Valley building examples, its focus is the park’s period of significance, the colonial to early republic eras (1750s - 1830s). We also retain as documents elements removed from existing historic park buildings. Sometimes, research in primary records has yielded additional information about specimens.

Preservationists from throughout the world study the collection to learn fabrication and construction techniques. The specimens serve as prototypes for replacement parts of existing buildings. Specific subsets are sufficiently representative for

use in scholarly studies. Architect Lee H. Nelson based his chronology of nail manufacture--still a standard reference—upon Independence’s examples. The collection is a valuable repository for students and for stewards of historic properties. Presently, the catalog is searchable from park offices and the collection is available by appointment.

Continuing the work of park architect Penny Batcheler, we intend to expand access to this wonderful treasure by relocating it to 311-317 Walnut Street. We are seeking support to create a self-guided exhibit for park visitors, provide on-line access to the catalog, and offer topical web exhibits. Contact park headquarters at 215-597-7120 if you can help.



Today, preservationists recognize the value of fragment collections. Independence’s large collection has inspired many others. Featured in symposia, traveling exhibitions and publications, our architectural study collection demonstrates the wisdom of not discarding the past.

*Charles E. Peterson, FAIA

INDE Rangers Participate in Gilder Lehrman Institute

The Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History promotes the study and love of American history. The Institute serves teachers, students, scholars, and the general public, and creates history-centered schools, organizes seminars and programs for educators, produces print and electronic publications and traveling exhibitions, sponsors lectures by eminent historians, and administers a History Teacher of the Year Award in every state through its partnership with Preserve America.

Since 1994, the Institute has sponsored week-long, tuition free summer seminars for public, parochial, and independent school teachers, National Park Service Rangers, and college professors. After an in-house selection process, Interpretation and Visitor Services staff were accepted into six seminars this year. Over the summer, the selectees traveled to various universities to immerse themselves in a variety of topics connected to our interpretive stories. Staff had the opportunity to meet prominent historians, study the most current scholarship, and collaborate with teachers to develop strategies for interpreting more effectively.

This year's Independence Gilder Lehrman attendees were: Cos Cosgrove who attended *Everyday Life in America* at Yale; Gerry Murphy, *The American Revolution* at New York University; Ed Welch, *The Era of George Washington* at Brown University; Renee Cockfield, *North American Slavery in Comparative Perspective* at the University of Maryland; Ted Johnson, *Passages to Freedom: Abolition and the Underground Railroad* at Yale; and Holly Johnson, *The International Impact of the Declaration of Independence* at Monticello and the University of Virginia.

President's House Site Update

The City of Philadelphia and Independence National Historical Park are working in partnership to tell this nationally important story of freedom and slavery in an honest, inspiring and informative way. The story of the President's House is a story of many themes: the house and the people who lived and worked there; the Executive Branch of the United States Government; the system and methods of enslavement; African-American Philadelphia; the move to freedom; and, history lost and found.

During the 2007 archeological dig, archeologists uncovered a series of unexpected findings. These included a basement below the kitchen where Hercules, an enslaved African who later escaped to freedom, presided as President Washington's acclaimed chef; a foundation from a bow window believed by some to be the prototype for what would become the Oval Office at the White House in Washington, DC; and an underground passage from the kitchen to the main house likely used by the enslaved Africans and servants of the household.

These findings dramatically convey the juxtaposition of freedom and slavery in making a new nation. The project team was confronted with a new challenge: to remain true to the

project's original goals and preserving the archeological discoveries while incorporating them into the design in a meaningful and understandable way.



The new commemoration of the President's House will allow for 24-hour access to the site. Visual technology will tell a series of compelling stories of life in the President's House. There will also be a place of solemn reflection in the area that is thought to be the former sleeping quarters of several enslaved persons, just at the entrance to the Liberty Bell Center. These interpretive features are intertwined with the "bricks and mortar" construction of the commemoration.

The City of Philadelphia, working with the Friends of Independence, has launched a fundraising campaign to raise the remaining funds required to complete the commemoration, along with an endowment for its continued operation and maintenance. This campaign had a successful launch with a reception at the National Constitution Center on September 9, 2008. Contributions can still be made, payable to The Friends of Independence National Historical Park – the President's House. Donations can be mailed to Mayor Michael Nutter, Attn Grants and Foundation Office, City Hall Room 225, Philadelphia, PA 19107.



Another Great Year for the Junior Ranger Program!

The Junior Ranger program is an annual educational, curriculum-based partnership between the Edgar Allan Poe National Historical Site (EDAL) and Spring Garden Elementary School in North Philadelphia. For 10 weeks each spring, the fifth grade class spends time with a Park Ranger on classroom exercises and field trips. For the eighth year, Interpretive Ranger Andrew McDougal served as the Program Coordinator, and 2008 was another great success!

Through the program, which is funded by Eastern National, the students become familiar with the NPS and its role in preserving and protecting our nation's resources and also with the various jobs of a Park Ranger. They will always remember the arrowhead as the NPS symbol and some of them may even



Spring Garden Elementary School Fifth Grade Class
with Ranger Andrew McDougal

consider a career with the NPS. The program instills within the children an appreciation for the NPS mission and a deeper understanding of our nation's history.

The program has a strong historical content, focusing on broad themes such as freedom and liberty. These themes are represented at INDE, EDAL, and other NPS sites that

the children were able to visit this year, including the Statue of Liberty National Monument, Gettysburg NMP, the Lincoln Memorial and the Washington Monument. The fieldtrip to the District of Columbia made this year's program particularly rewarding!

Participants are inner-city children from economically disadvantaged backgrounds who might not have the opportunity to travel outside Philadelphia. The program opens up a new world to them and enables them to use their creative minds in a fun learning environment. As a community outreach program, it enables INDE to do something positive, providing role models while educating the children about our nation's history and the role of the NPS in preserving and protecting our national treasures.



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior
<http://www.nps.gov/inde>

Independence National Historical Park

143 South Third Street
Philadelphia, PA 19106

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

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

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Drawing Dock Creek A Project of the American Philosophical Society Museum

Find the "underground" in Independence National Historical Park. This site-specific installation by artist Winifred Lutz lets you follow the path of a creek buried long ago under the streets of colonial Philadelphia. Discover the good, the bad, and the dangerous in Dock Creek's evolution from pristine creek to polluted sewer. The grand finale of the five-month-long Dock Creek project is the installation, this month, of 48,000 feet (9 miles) of vibrant blue elastic bands stretched across the swale of the dry creek bed, visible in Independence National Historical Park between Third and Fourth streets. On September 27, 2008, volunteers will dismantle the outdoor art work after a 1:00pm concluding performance by artist Brett Keyser about the creek's history at the site of the installation.

Sculptor Winifred Lutz is known for her site-integrated installations that explore the intersection of art and nature. In resurrecting Dock Creek, buried long ago when it had become a fetid sewer, Lutz's work raises questions that are as pertinent today as they were for 18th century Philadelphians: what happens when rapid growth and a complex environment converge? How shall public versus private rights be weighed? When is land use planning appropriate? Is there a technology fix that will solve the problem?



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

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EXPERIENCE YOUR AMERICA™

Upcoming Events at INDE

Join Independence National Historical Park on **September 27, 10am - 2pm**, to celebrate National Public Lands Day with Art in the Park! This day of art exhibits and volunteer projects will bring together the cultural and natural resources of Independence NHP and its partners. Registration and breakfast start at 9:30 am. Call 215-597-1293 to register.



On **October 11**, INDE hosts a public archeology forum in the Independence Living History Center. The program is held in partnership with the Philadelphia Archaeological Forum to celebrate Pennsylvania Archaeology Month, and features information tables and short illustrated talks by local archeologists. The event is free and open to the public, no reservations required. Call 215-861-4956.

Celebrate Halloween at the Edgar Allan Poe National Historical Site (7th and Spring Garden Streets). Candlelight tours will be offered on **Thursday October 23 and Friday, October 24**, three tours per evening. Tours are free to members of the Friends of Poe, \$10 to all others. Call 215-597-7919 to reserve tickets. Visit the site on **October 31** for a Halloween event featuring Poe and Elvira!

