



# SPRINGFIELD ARMORY

NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE



## Significance of the Springfield Armory

For 174 years, the men and women of Springfield Armory shaped America's destiny through pioneering technological innovation, improved manufacturing processes, and increased use of labor-saving machines. Today, Springfield Armory National Historic Site preserves and interprets this colorful history in original buildings on their historic grounds through museum displays, public programs, notable collections, activities, and internet resources.



*President Franklin Roosevelt seemed to take special pride in Springfield Armory's invention and production of the M1 Garand Rifle during his visits.*



## History

Springfield Armory exerted a profound influence over the city of Springfield and on the Nation. It carried out the manufacturing, storage, repair, testing and development functions assigned by the United States Army. In doing so it stimulated technological innovation, encouraged improved manufacturing processes and fostered increased use of labor-saving machines. All of this had a lasting impact on American industry.



The availability of Springfield Armory weapons influenced battlefield tactics and wartime strategy in every armed conflict of the Nation. Armory inventions and industrial processes, adopted by the private sector in the 19th and 20th centuries, revolutionized the manufacture of consumer products and provided a major catalyst for American industrialization. Highly skilled workers attracted to the Armory became a major reason for the City of

Springfield's rapid growth in a region that came to be known as "The Precision Corridor" for its many advanced industries.

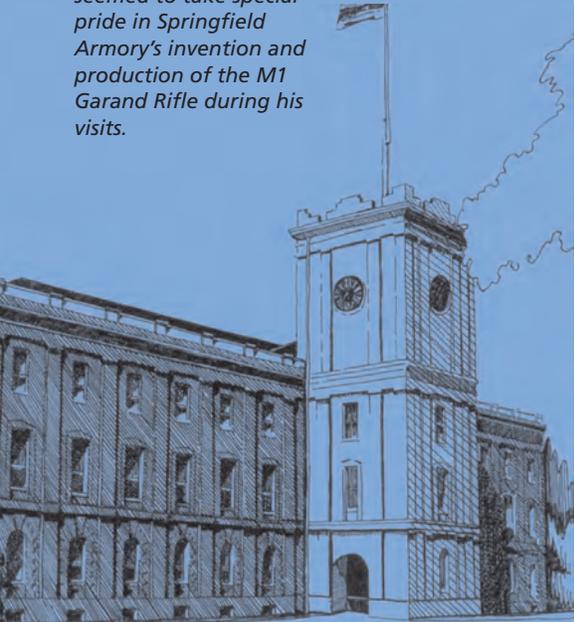
## Springfield Armory National Historic Site

Today, the National Park Service (NPS) manages a twenty-acre portion of the National Historic Site. The remainder is owned by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, home to Springfield Technical Community College (STCC). They work together as legislated partners to manage the site as a whole, making for a very dynamic and bustling urban park. Here is the Benton Small Arms Collection, one of the world's largest historic firearm collections which, along with historic structures and landscapes, form the core of the cultural and natural resources preserved and interpreted for public benefit.



*Website: [www.nps.gov/spar](http://www.nps.gov/spar)*

*Social Media: [facebook.com/SPARNHS](https://www.facebook.com/SPARNHS) [twitter.com/SPARNHS](https://twitter.com/SPARNHS)*



## Advancing Springfield Armory's Education Mission

Springfield Armory National Historic Site has built upon the success of last year by continuing its efforts to engage, interact, and collaborate with educators throughout Springfield and the surrounding areas. A key outcome of the park's ongoing education initiative was the formation of the park's Education Advisory Committee (EAC).

Of notable achievement was the park's hugely accomplished, year-long Park for Every Classroom (PEC) project that consisted of pre-visit lessons and onsite curriculum plans written by our Master Teacher Ranger Teacher Harriet Kulig of Birchland Park Middle School, post visit experience in the school featuring community partner Rob Wilson and veteran speakers from the Amherst-based Veterans Education project, and the culminating service-learning component where students wrote letters to local veterans of war. With the additional partnership of Jon Paradis from the Soldiers' Home of Holyoke, students were able to deliver their letters in person in a heartwarming ceremony for students, veterans, and project partners alike.



Springfield Armory National Historic Site was also the proud recipient of two grants in 2014 through the National Park Service's Northeast Region that provided the park with an additional Teacher Ranger Teacher position as well as funding to cover transportation costs for underserved and under-represented youth.



## Historic Weapons Program is Back

During 2014, Springfield revived its historic weapons demonstrations. During the summer, ranger guided programs help visitors understand the workings and operations of historic firearms. Park staff also conducted off-site blank-firing demonstrations including several at the Eastern States Exposition.



## Springfield Armory Visitor Survey

Those interested in the demographic details of Springfield tourism will find lots of useful information in our 2013 visitor survey. You can find the report on our website at

<http://www.nps.gov/spar/parkmgmt/management-documents.htm>

## Preserving and Exhibiting Cultural Resource



*Arsenals Under Attack runs through March 2015*

### Tree Projects

Springfield Armory staff continued working to improve the park's landscape and grounds to its historic splendor. Working with the NPS Arbor Team, a project was completed removing invasive tree species and pruning others, ultimately opening up the beautiful views from the Armory over downtown Springfield.



*Working to restore historic tree canopy*

### Special Exhibits

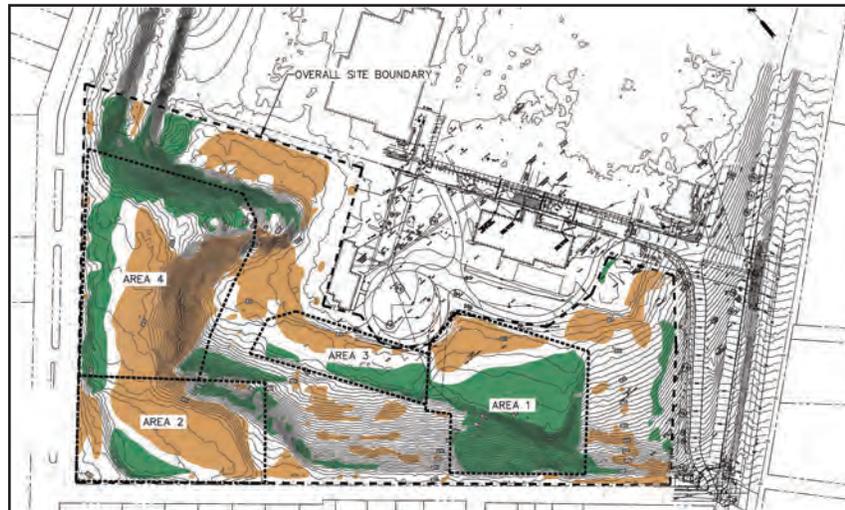
Two special exhibits brought exciting changes to the park's Visitor Center. "Steampunk Springfield Armory" included fantastical weapons created by local artists on display with some of the stranger firearms from the museum collection. This was followed by "Arsenals Under Attack," a comparison of Shays' Rebellion in 1787 and John Brown's Raid in 1859. This exhibit includes artifacts from the Springfield Armory collection and others on loan from Harpers Ferry National Historical Park and University of Massachusetts.



*Chief of Resources Gavin Gardner, Park Ranger Jennifer Zazo and Curator Alex MacKenzie at the opening of "Steampunk Springfield Armory"*

### TOPO Project

A study was completed in 2014 to better map the topographical features of the Springfield Armory landscape. This fascinating project revealed that much of the soil used to create athletic fields behind the Armory was removed from locations around the site. This new understanding will influence upcoming projects to repair the natural drainage by restoring the original contours of the hillslope.



*Topographic map showing alterations to Springfield Armory Site. Soil was taken from areas shown in yellow to provide infill for the green shaded areas. A future project may restore the landscape.*

## Creating Improved Signage

In FY 2014 Springfield Armory NHS completed a number of sign projects that greatly improved the identity of the park and our visitors' ability to visit the site. These projects addressed deficiencies with signs directing visitors to the park both from the highway and through the city of Springfield, replaced our outdated entrance sign, installed new signs on the fence around Springfield Technical Community College/Springfield Armory NHS, and installed a radio antenna to broadcast a visitor information radio message (AM 1710). We are already hearing compliments from visitors who can now easily navigate to the park from the highway, and take their photo next to our great entrance sign. Planning and execution of these projects took several years and the participation and assistance of a number of partners including Springfield Armory employees, Lauren Lainez at the NPS Harpers Ferry Center, Deb Avery with Springfield Technical Community College, Bao Lang and Steve Timmins with MassDOT, Springfield City Councilors Melvin Edwards and Kateri Walsh, and Springfield city employees Chris Cignoli, Phil Dromey and Kevin Kennedy. Thank You!

*Lack of adequate signage was a daily complaint at the historic site. Now visitors see these highway signs and can tune to 1710 AM to find the park*



*New signage created by Springfield Technical Community College, installed on the exterior of the site. Thanks to the staff at STCC for pushing this project to completion*

*New and attractive entrance monument installed at the Springfield Armory Museum*

# The Rewards of Special Events and Partnerships

## Volunteers: One Key to Success

Thank goodness for our Volunteers in Parks (VIPs)! There were 113 people of all ages who stepped up and donated 4245 hours to the areas of Visitor Services, Curatorial, and Facilities. Armory Day living historians fired the cannons and rifles while others led the crowd in dances from the Civil War era. This one day event brought forth 54 volunteers who contributed 555 hours. The Flamingo Big Band burst with songs of the WWII era while volunteers taught eager participants to swing dance. Armory Day and Big Band events entertained over 1130 people.



*Park Ranger Susan Ashman and Smokey Bear at the Big E*

## Celebrating the Big E

Wonderful surprise greeted visitors to the NPS booth at the Eastern States Exposition's Big E Fair. A new much larger location and redesigned exhibit lured the fair goers to the booth. Total booth visitation of 37,210 more than doubled last year's numbers.



## Partners in Music

One of the happiest moments of the summer was our collaboration with the Springfield Community Music School. We reached out to new audiences and over 600 families came to the Springfield Armory grounds for their end of year recitals. Children as young as 5 up to adults played violins, brass, and drums to delighted onlookers.



*In September, Springfield Armory NHS hosted a Naturalization Ceremony where 250 new Americans were naturalized.*



*Springfield Mayor Sarno congratulates new citizens at Springfield Armory NHS.*

## Help Restore the Historic Clock

On the first anniversary of its incorporation, Springfield Armory Alliance reaches high – literally five stories off the ground – in its fundraising goals. The Museum’s clock tower with its four historic clock faces, one on each side, dates back to 1850 at the heyday of the Springfield Armory. Yet, for many years, time has stood still at half past five. It is about time the clock was fixed. The Alliance’s effort is to “restore time.”



In December, 2014, Springfield Armory Alliance’s membership launched its campaign to bring this structure, along with the brass bell on the tower’s roof, to state-of-the-art working order while preserving the historic integrity. The machinery, built in 1848, powered the clocks and rang the bell on the hour and half hour for over 150 years.

The clock restoration project will cost just \$12,000 or the total of only \$1.37 per hour of 2015. All minutes from 2015 on are, in a sense, free time. The clock project is one of many that the Alliance Board and membership will pursue in the near future. Other activities include concert performances, garden landscaping, and Armory Day events.

*Working to preserve the historic mechanism*



*This historic photo shows a Springfield Armory employee operating the historic clock’s mechanism*

*The mission of the Springfield Armory Alliance, Inc., a non-profit agency “friends group,” is to support Springfield Armory NHS in numerous exciting activities. Key efforts of the Alliance will be to support historic preservation, advocacy, education, and promotion.*

*Please consider supporting the Springfield Armory Alliance and become a member. Five membership levels range from \$15 to \$250 for individuals and families. There are also several exciting projects underway and volunteers are needed. For further information please call 413-271-3982 or email: [armoryalliance@gmail.com](mailto:armoryalliance@gmail.com). Thank you.*



## Happenings in 2015

### Coming May 15, 2015 - Precision Valley Symposium

Sponsored by Springfield Armory National  
Historic Site and Springfield Technical  
Community College

#### PROGRAM

- 9:00 AM Welcome & Opening Remarks
- 9:30 AM Yankee Armorers and the Union  
War Machine: A Technological  
Perspective on the American  
Civil War; Merritt Roe Smith,  
Massachusetts Institute of  
Technology
- 10:20 AM As the Valley Falls: Deindustrial-  
ization After the Second World  
War; Bob Farrant, University of  
Massachusetts at Lowell
- 10:50 AM Hartford, CT: Factory Town Puts  
the Pieces Together in Explosive  
New Ways; Eric S. Hintz,  
Smithsonian Institution
- 11:30 AM Panel Discussion, moderated by  
Dean Arlene Rodriguez, with  
audience on "The Future of  
Precision Manufacturing -  
Where Do We Go from Here?"

The afternoon will also offer the opportunity  
to select one of several activities. If you  
would like to attend, please call or write  
Richard Colton (413-734-8551 x235;  
richard\_colton@nps.gov)!

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## New Outdoor Exhibits

Targeted for installation in the summer of  
2015 are three Welcoming Kiosks that feature  
3D orientation maps, and two separate  
panels to introduce Springfield Technical  
Community College and Springfield Armory  
National Historic Site. Three outdated exhibits  
will be updated to tell the story of the historic  
fence, the Main Arsenal and the Commanding  
Officer Quarters.



New Exhibit



## Hollywood Guns Exhibit

Opening April 2015, our next blockbuster  
special exhibit: "Springfield Armory Goes  
to Hollywood". Join us as we celebrate the  
use of Springfield Armory firearms in  
classic movies and explore the often  
historically inaccurate representation of  
these iconic weapons.

## NPS Centennial Celebration

The 100th anniversary of the National  
Park will occur on August 25, 2016. The  
Springfield Armory along with the rest of  
the NPS will use both 2015 and 2016 to  
build up to the big birthday.

