

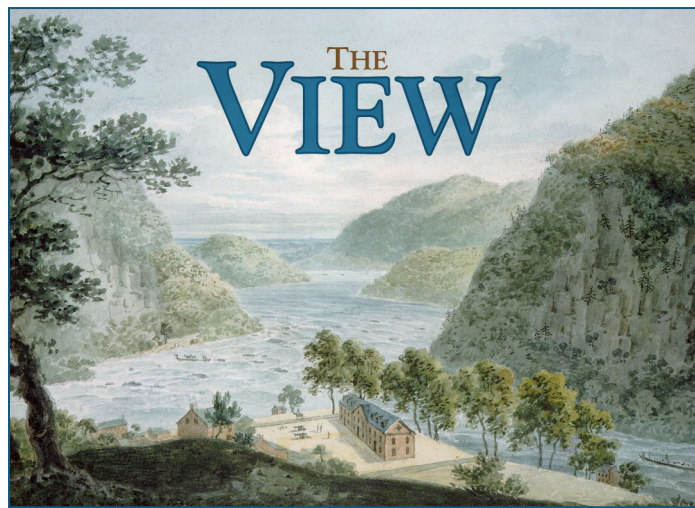
Summer 2025

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"Junction of the Potomac and Shenandoah, Virginia," by William Roberts, dating from 1808-1809. This is one of the oldest known prints of Harpers Ferry. In 1783, Thomas Jefferson declared that this view was "worth a voyage across the Atlantic." (Museum of Early Southern Decorative Arts, Winston-Salem, North Carolina)

HFNHP-Related Story Told On Ford's Theatre Stage

It's a well-known fact that Abraham Lincoln, the 16th President of the United States, was shot by John Wilkes Booth during a performance of *Our American Cousin* at Ford's Theatre in Washington, DC on April 14, 1865.

But it took 103 years for another stage performance to take place at the theatre. Performed in 1968, *John Brown's Body* was based on a poem by Stephen Vincent Benét and followed two soldiers, one Union and one Confederate, through John Brown's attack on Harpers Ferry to the end of the Civil War.

Other shows performed at Ford's during Lincoln's presidency, including *She Stoops to Conquer* and Shakespeare's *The Comedy of Errors*, were also featured on the mainstage during that first season of Ford's Theatre's reopening.

So, why the gap in time between stage performances after the assassination? Being a crime scene, the Ford's Theatre building was seized by the United States government and remained closed throughout the assassination investigation. The government returned the theatre to its owner, John T. Ford, in July of 1865, following the trial and execution of the Booth conspirators.

Ford planned to reopen the theatre on July 10, 1865, with a performance of *The Octoroon*. Although tickets were sold, many Lincoln followers were incensed. Controversy surrounded the opening of the theater with Ford even receiving threats of violence. On opening night, Secretary of War Edwin Stanton sent a detachment of soldiers to take control of the theatre. Several hundred ticket holders were turned away, and Stanton told Ford the federal government was confiscating the theatre. Ford was eventually compensated for his loss of property.

Throughout the ensuing years, the building was used as government offices. Various renovations and remodels were made during the transition. In the process, weight-bearing columns and supports as well as many original fixtures and features were removed.

The box occupied by Lincoln on the night of his assassination was dismantled and stored elsewhere.

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Did You Know...

...that Abraham Lincoln's coffin was moved 17 times to protect the late president's remains? His coffin was opened on five separate occasions.

There was a foiled plot in 1876 to steal Lincoln's body and hold it for ransom.

His body was finally moved for the last time in 1901 when The Lincoln Tomb was completed in Oak Ridge Cemetery in Springfield, Illinois. Lincoln is buried with his wife, Mary, and three of their sons - Edward, William and Thomas.



Ford's Theatre then ... and Ford's Theatre now. Photos courtesy of Library of Congress and HFFPA staff.



On This Day In Harpers Ferry History

The National Park Service acquired its first property on Maryland Heights in July of 1954.

The occupation of Maryland Heights was crucial during the Civil War as the heights overlook the town of Harpers Ferry and the confluence of the Shenandoah and Potomac rivers - whoever controlled the heights, controlled the town. This strategic importance is visualized when hikers reach the Maryland Heights Trail overlook.

Troops were stationed on and around Maryland Heights throughout the war. One Union soldier, after celebrating too much in nearby Sandy Hook on July 4, 1861, stumbled down the Chesapeake & Ohio Canal towpath and claimed the life of Frederick Augustus Roeder.

Roeder was the proprietor of White Hall Tavern on Potomac Street, and his family also ran Roeder's Confectionary. Despite his success as a local business owner, Roeder is largely remembered as being the first civilian killed in Harpers Ferry on July 4, 1861.

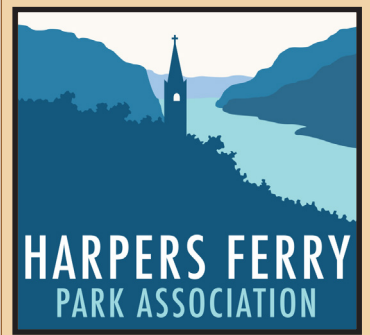
A Union sympathizer, Roeder heard that a United States flag was to be unfurled on Maryland Heights on Independence Day. During a cease-fire he ventured to the confluence of the rivers to see the sight.

The event is perhaps best described by Roeder's friend, Joseph Barry, who recalled the incident in his town history, *The Strange Story of Harpers Ferry*:

A Union soldier "... had become drunk, celebrating the glorious Fourth at Sandy Hook, Maryland. Hearing of the skirmish at Harper's Ferry, he staggered towards that place and arrived after the end of the fight, and when the confederate enemy had retired. Mr. Roeder walked towards the railroad office and while he was sauntering about, a shot was fired from the Maryland side of the Potomac" [it was the drunken soldier's shot.] "Seeing another citizen.. on the railroad, the soldier fired. . . , swearing that he would kill some d---- rebel. The shot missed the object at which it was directed and striking the end of Fouke's hotel, it glanced and hit Mr. Roeder, who, unfortunately, happened to be then coming 'round the corner of that building. The bullet tore a ghastly hole in his groin. . . . which inflicted a mortal wound on him, He managed to reach his home unassisted—for there was scarcely an able bodied man then at the place. . . in a half an hour. . . death soon released him from his sufferings."



Maryland Heights is seen in the distance beyond Shenandoah Street in this modern view. The heights' strategic importance is evident in the photo below as it overlooks Harpers Ferry. Photos courtesy of *Library of Congress* and HFPA staff.



The View is published by the Harpers Ferry Park Association (HFPA), an Official National Park Cooperating Association that supports the mission of the National Park Service.

The Association operates the Park Bookshop in Harpers Ferry NHP. Profits from sales are returned to the park to support interpretive and educational programs to enhance your visit.

You are invited to join this unique organization and be a part of Harpers Ferry's special family. For more information call (304) 535-6881, e-mail us at info@hfpawv.org, or visit our website at www.harpers-ferryhistory.org.

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Upcoming HFPA Programs

Where They Lived: A Tour of Armory Worker Houses | Trails Less Traveled

Saturday, July 12, 2025 | 10:00 AM - 11:30 AM | The Storer College Gates

Don't miss this 1-mile, moderate walking tour of historic Armory Houses, including a stop at the Odd Fellows Lodge, where Civil War-era graffiti can be viewed!

History on the Rocks: A Geology Tour of Harpers Ferry | Trails Less Traveled

Saturday, August 9, 2025 | 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM | Lower Town Harpers Ferry

Discover how a historian interprets the geology of Harpers Ferry.

This two-block walking tour of Lower Town is rated EASY. Participants should meet at the benches on The Green, across from the Park Bookshop.

Forging Change: The Industrial Revolution and the Harpers Ferry Armory | History on Tap

Thursday, August 21, 2025 | 6:00 PM - 7:00 PM | Alstadts Ale House

Former ranger Troy Cool will explore the timeline of major weapon models manufactured here and learn how the technological advances pioneered by the arms industry in 19th-century America became a driving force behind the "American System" of manufacture.



Young explorers and book lovers are invited to embark on imaginative adventures through readings at Harpers Ferry National Historical Park this summer. Meet on The Green for each program.

Winged Wonders

Wednesday, July 2, 2025 | 10:00 AM - 11:30 AM

Learn about the power of teamwork, conservation, and the wonders of the natural world through the story of monarch butterflies.

Mushroom Rain

Wednesday, July 16, 2025 | 10:00 AM - 11:30 AM

Explore the wonderful, mysterious, and sometimes bizarre world of mushrooms.

Two Thousand Miles to Happy

Wednesday, July 30, 2025 | 10:00 AM - 11:30 AM

Come learn about one hiker's amazing journey and the spirit of adventure that drives hikers to take on the Appalachian Trail.

Whose House is That?

Wednesday, August 6, 2025 | 10:00 AM - 11:30 AM

Learn about nature's amazing animal architects!

The Great Virginia Flood of 1870 | History on Tap

Thursday, September 18, 2025 | 6:00 PM - 7:00 PM | Alstadts Ale House

Join public historian and author of *The Great Virginia Flood of 1870* Paula Green as she details the flood and the process of recovery in an era before modern relief programs.

Night Sky Program

Friday, September 19, 2025 | Time TBD | Murphy-Chambers Farm

Join the Harpers Ferry Park Association, Harpers Ferry NHP and the Tri State Astronomers for an exploration of the night sky. Bring a lawn chair or blanket and dress for cool nights. This program is weather dependent and subject to cancellation. Inclement weather date is Saturday, September 20, 2025.

Paw Paw Hike | Trails Less Traveled

Saturday, September 20, 2025 | 9:00 AM - 11:00 AM | the Point in Lower Town Harpers Ferry

This 2-mile hike will introduce you to the Paw Paw and enable you to find them elsewhere in the park and beyond.

This hike is rated EASY to MODERATE, with a 100-foot elevation gain and areas of uneven rocky and muddy footing. Long pants are recommended due to poison ivy in the area.

HFPA Annual Meeting - Save The Date!

Our Annual Meeting will be held at Claymont Court in Charles Town on September 6, 2025, from 4 to 6 PM!

Join us to hear about the past year's achievements, exciting initiatives on the horizon and celebrate our members and their invaluable support of the park.

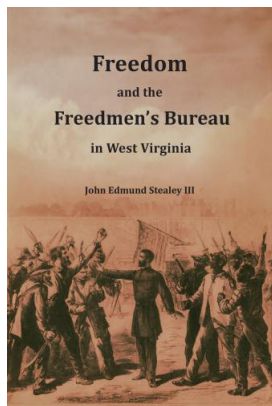
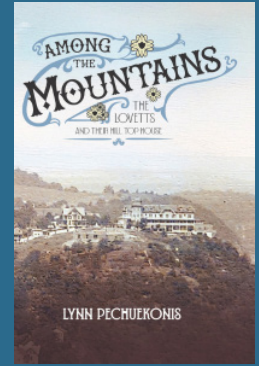
Following a catered meal and presentation, festivities will continue with an engaging fireside talk at 7:00 PM with former Harpers Ferry NHP Chief Historian Dennis Frye.

Check Out The Latest HFPA Book Releases!

Among The Mountains: The Lovetts And Their Hilltop House By Lynn Pechuekonis follows the true story of African Americans Tom and Lavinia Lovett who opened a summer resort hotel in historic Harpers Ferry, West Virginia in 1890.

Despite operating in an era of rampant racism and social segregation, the Lovetts operated their hotel for 35 years, filling it with a middle-and upper-income clientele, mainly from the Baltimore-Washington DC metro area. The resort was renowned for its generous hospitality, first-rate restaurant, and breathtaking views of the Potomac River.

Now available for preorder at: harpersferryhistory.org/product/among-mountains-lovetts-and-their-hill-top-house.



Reacting to Virginia's secession, western Virginians created a new state, the only one the Civil War fostered. The bitter conflict and governmental realignment aroused issues of loyalty, survival, and freedom and inflicted civil and military turmoil into the lives of all white and African American residents.

At the end of the war, the Lincoln Administration established the Freedmen's Bureau to alleviate the formerly enslaved peoples' plight. Bureau agents faced geographical challenges, white opposition, and a serious refugee problem at Harpers Ferry. They installed Northern teachers in Jefferson and Berkeley counties before working statewide to build schools in Black communities.

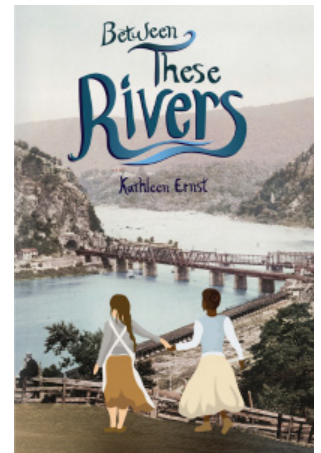
Freedom and the Freedmen's Bureau in West Virginia revisits this tumultuous time in American history by presenting the original Bureau agents' dispatches. Order at: harpersferryhistory.org/product/freedom-and-freedmens-bureau-west-virginia

In *Between These Rivers* by award-winning author Kathleen Ernst, Ida Mae Parker will soon graduate from high school. A descendant of enslaved people, Ida Mae wants to focus on her studies and to stay away from trouble caused by the Jim Crow laws designed to keep Black people from thriving. As racial ugliness targets her own family, though, she struggles to find her place in the world.

Circumstances force Hazel Whitaker to leave her poor white family. She longs to create a better future for herself, but her dream of becoming a photographer seem impossible to achieve.

Ida Mae and Hazel form an unlikely friendship when fate throws them together. But, after tragedy strikes, will supporting each other provide the inner strength they need to stand tall? Order by going to:

harpersferryhistory.org/product/between-these-rivers



HFPA held a *Between These Rivers* release party on May 25, 2025. Attendees enjoyed a book reading and autograph-signing session with author Kathleen Ernst amidst a carnival-like atmosphere. Many thanks to True Treats Historic Candy in Harpers Ferry for the special candy treat bags (left). HFPA staff photos.



In Memoriam

A Harpers Ferry neighbor, collaborator, supporter, and friend, Midge Flinn Yost, sadly passed away on May 21, 2025.

In her career as a filmmaker and photographer, Midge received an Emmy award for the film *The War of 1812 on the Chesapeake: Home of the Brave* for Maryland Public Television. Her documentary *Storer College: A Legacy of Light and Learning*, has been widely screened. In 2023 the Washington Post's front page featured her photo of a peregrine falcon nest on Maryland Heights, and in 2024 she completed the short film, *Peregrine Falcons of Harpers Ferry*.

HFPA wishes to express its deepest condolences to Midge's many family and friends. Donations to the association in her name will support cultural and natural resource initiatives at Harpers Ferry National Historical Park. Donations can be made to Harpers Ferry Park Association, P.O. Box 197, Harpers Ferry WV 25425 or online at harpersferryhistory.org/donations.



This photo of young peregrine falcons on Maryland Heights taken by Midge Flinn Yost appeared in the July 2, 2023 *Washington Post*.

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By 1893, over 500 government clerks were working in the building, many of whom had been expressing concern over its safety and visible structural damages.

At one point, it was reported that supervisors had to release employees floor-by-floor at the end of the workday to avoid putting too much weight on the main staircase.

On the morning of Friday, June 9, 1893, a brick support pier in the basement collapsed and like a domino effect, the building's columns collapsed, floor by floor, leaving a 40-foot hole through all three stories of the structure. Twenty-two workers perished and over 60 more were injured.

Ford's Theatre was eventually repaired, and in 1933 the National Park Service took control of it and the Petersen House across the street where Lincoln died. After serving for a time as the Lincoln Museum under supervision of the National Park



Service, a campaign began in the late 1960s to restore Ford's Theater to its Civil War period appearance. This effort was completed in 1968 when *John Brown's Body* was presented on the Ford's Theatre mainstage for the first time in over 100 years.

Today, visitors to the NPS historic site can see performances on the historic mainstage, visit the Peterson House and explore an exhibit focusing on the hunt for Booth, Lincoln's funeral train and the conspirators' trial. For more information go to <https://fords.org/> and <https://www.nps.gov/foth/index.htm>.



The Peterson boarding house where Abraham Lincoln was carried after being shot. At left, the room where Lincoln died. HFPA staff photos.

Harpers Ferry NHP News

According to Kristen Maxfield, Harpers Ferry National Historical Park Interpretation and Education Program Manager, approximately 6,400 students and chaperones enjoyed HFNHP throughout the spring. Educational programming was mostly provided by the park, while additional educators and learners used their own curriculum.

Other programs enjoyed this spring by visitors of all ages included: *Who Is The Enemy: The War of 1812 At Harpers Ferry*; *As American as Apple Pie: The Industrial Revolution*; *Farming In The City: Food In The Backyard*; and *Defend And Protect: Arming the American Soldier*.

Harpers Ferry Park Association helped support many of the park's spring events.

A special thanks to all of our supporters and everyone who purchases items in the bookshop or donates to the association in some other way. Your support helps make park programming possible!

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Upcoming HFNHP Events:

- **National League of Colored Women Hike, July 17, 2025, 10:00 A.M.** Participants will follow in the footsteps of the National League of Colored Women on the 129th anniversary of their visit to Harpers Ferry. Join us to learn about the park's role in the Civil War and the struggle for Civil Rights. Meet a ranger at the Murphy Farm parking area for this 1 hour, 1 mile hike.
- **Saving Bodies and Souls: The United States Christian Commission, July 19, 2025, 11:00 A.M. to 4:00 P.M.** The United States Christian Commission worked out of the park's historic Roeder Block to give soldiers aid and comfort. USCC Diet Kitchens prepared specialized menus for the sick and wounded. The public will get the chance to inspect foods made from USCC recipes such as chicken jelly and hardtack army bread made fresh in the park's beehive oven. This event is supported by the HFPA.
- **Appalachian Chamber Music Festival, August 8, 2025, 7:00 P.M.** Enjoy the opening night concert of the Appalachian Chamber Music Festival. A highlight of this opening night will include a collaboration with the Howard Burns Quartet which will celebrate original arrangements of Don Redman's music for jazz quartet and strings.

The concert is co-sponsored by HFPA and will be held on the Mather lawn.

- **Suit Yourself: Upcycling Cotton Clothing To Rag Paper, August 30, 2025, 12:00 P.M. to 3:00 P.M.** Even though early craftsmen and women first worked with their hands, machinery introduced ideas of expansion and continued innovation. Join rangers in Frankel's Ready Made Clothing Store as they discuss topics including unrest, enslavement and economic hierarchy. The HFPA will be cosponsoring this event.

Mission Accomplished!



Maxfield also reported that the HVAC project in the Industry Museum is now complete! The exhibit should reopen by the end of June.



Home Sweet Home

Thanks to the hard work of staff and volunteers, HFPA has returned to its home at 723 Shenandoah Street. We missed our beloved building and are happy to be back in operation with functioning air conditioning! Special gratitude is extended to Malcolm and Fit-2-Move LLC for the special care and customer service they provided.

Please join me in sharing much appreciation to our volunteers: Todd Baldau, John Barton, Chris Craig, Jane Davis, Storm DiConstanzo, Rose Guier, Jackie Hill, Jayden Hill, Daniel Hopkin, Susan Journell, Jim Koenig, Betsy Kravitz, Don Lackey, Cali Mayne, Gilian McPhee, Jim Silvia, Vivienne Simmons, Kristen Southern, and Ed Wheelless.



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Harpers Ferry Park Association

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Basic Supporter Benefits: 15% discount on every item in the Park Bookshop; additional Supporters-only sales throughout the year; discount at most national park bookshops around the country; discounted tickets and early registration for our unique fundraisers and educational workshops; subscription to *The View*, our quarterly newsletter; monthly e-newsletter with the most up-to-date information on events at Harpers Ferry; invitation to our Annual Supporter Meeting and Picnic.

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