

## Notes & Comments

### Stimulus Funding For Valley Forge

The park issued the following press release on May 4, 2009:

Valley Forge National Historical Park's recently completed *General Management Plan* laid out a twenty-year strategy for protecting and restoring historic resources, restoring the environment, and broadening opportunities for meaningful experiences for visitors.

Major strides in achieving these goals will be made this year. In recognition of the historic and natural significance of the park and the contribution it makes to the regional economy, the President and the United States Congress have announced that major capital investments will be made. The park will receive \$2,182,000 from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) of 2009 and \$1,332,000 in appropriated funds for important preservation and mobility projects.

ARRA funds will be used in the restoration and rehabilitation of significant historic structures and landscapes at Valley Forge. \$1.3 million will be invested to complete the Washington's Headquarters area rehabilitation project, including completing the restoration of the adjacent Valley Forge train station. The historic train station canopy along the rail platform will be restored, a new, safe entrance to the site for drivers will be provided, and historic landscape restoration will continue.

\$726,000 will be invested in preservation of Lord Stirling's Quarters and the Maurice Stephens House, augmenting earlier investments and bringing the buildings closer to future use by the public. These historic houses will be used to bring to the public new stories and themes about the encampment experience of both soldiers and the civilians who lived here.

Additional ARRA funds will be invested throughout the park for much-needed improvements on other historic structures including window replacement, masonry repairs, installation of modern heating systems, and painting.

Projects to restore the natural environment include the continuing replacement of trees in the historic landscape, continuing removal of exotic invasive species, and implementation of the deer management plan.

This year's federal appropriation includes funding for projects that directly benefit visitors and regional neighbors. \$1,000,000 was received to begin the planning and design for an expansion of the park's visitor center, including more museum, activities, and retail space. \$142,500 was received for the "Missing Link" Trail, which will provide a safe connection across Valley Creek between the Knox trailhead and the park's Valley Creek and Mount Misery trail systems and also the future Chester Valley regional trail [see next article on the Patriots Path—*Ed.*]. A 20% match for these funds will be provided by the Friends of Valley Forge Park. The reconstruction of the Joseph Plumb Martin Trail, the popular loop trail used by almost one million visitors each year, will continue with a \$402,418 investment this year. \$237,000 also was appropriated to PennDOT to continue work on the River Crossing Complex of projects intended to reduce congestion on US 422 at the Schuylkill River.

The Quarterly staff contacted Timothy Long, Historical Architect at Valley Forge, who provided these additional details:

For now, we know that there is funding for replacement/rehabilitating windows and doors at Stirling's Quarters. Also included is some more stucco work and other minor repairs, all external. The Maurice Stephens house, site of Huntington's Quarters, will likewise be treated the same way.

In addition, but not related to the stimulus package, is the compilation of an Historic Structure Report for the Mordecai Moore House (current Ranger Station).

The third actual bricks-and-mortar project, if it comes through, will deal with multiple buildings, mostly encampment.

Another project that isn't part of the stimulus package but should have impact is the replacement/repair of the shutters on the Philander Chase Knox House.

In addition, Wayne Rotary will be doing some work in the Valley Forge Farm area under the direction of Ernest Eadeh, who has donated much time to this complex over the last six years in conjunction with the Penn State Alumni of the area.

## Patriots Path Walk

On April 25, Tredyffrin Township and Chester County co-sponsored a hike along the proposed route of the Patriots Path, a network of trails intended to connect Valley Forge National Historical Park with the Paoli Battlefield and East Whiteland's Battle of the Clouds Park. The multi-generational group of hikers was led by Sean Moir, chair of Tredyffrin's Sidewalks, Trails, and Paths Committee (and a *Quarterly* contributor), and Jake Michael of the Chester County Planning Commission. They were escorted by bicycle-mounted Tredyffrin police officers Larry Meoli and Don Molineux.

Following the roadbed of the Chester Valley Railroad (eventually to be the Chester Valley Trail), the group passed by old bridge abutments, later determined to be the remnants of a 19th century bridge that was likely erected over the tracks to join the fields of the Wilson farm, severed when the railroad was built. Further along, the hikers were able to inspect an old stone arch culvert running beneath the roadbed, in the process of being repaired by the county in preparation for the construction of the trail. Many such culverts will be repaired, using traditional stoneworking techniques.

Nearing Cedar Hollow Rd., a detour was made along the Warner Spur roadbed to the point where it crosses Route 202, on its way to the former Cedar Hollow limestone quarry. There the group was able to view the former train bridge resting several feet higher than it was the previous week, having been raised on a set of very large jacks as part of PennDOT's US 202 Section 300 expansion program.

Although the full scope of the Patriots Path project is still being investigated, it seems that there will be many opportunities for future hikers to learn about the area's revolutionary-era history as well as its agricultural, mining, and railroad heritage.



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