



HFC *on* MEDIA

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Issue 8



Associate Director for Partnerships, Interpretation/ Education, Volunteers, and Outdoor Recreation Chris Jarvi with Gary Cummins (center) and Nancy Kaufman at Harpers Ferry Center (Photo by David Guiney).

From the Manager

Harpers Ferry Center's New Home

Harpers Ferry Center will have a new home. No, we're not moving. But as part of the general WASO restructuring, Harpers Ferry Center is moving from the Associate Director, Park Planning, Facilities, and Lands (Sue Masica) to the Associate Director, Partnerships, Interpretation and Education, Volunteers, and Outdoor Recreation (Chris Jarvi). The proposed changes have been communicated to Congress for review and comment and are scheduled to take effect in early July 2005.

A beneficial effect will be that HFC and Interpretation and Education will be once again brought together. Hopefully this will create a single voice for National Park Service interpretation at a time when it is most needed. I am not aware of any park that organizes interpretation into two divisions – personal services and media. A successful interpretive operation integrates personal services and media into a coherent program that makes the best use of both to deliver important information so all visitors can enjoy safe visits and understand each park's significance and values. WASO should mirror this, and hopefully it will.

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Service-wide Sign Program Launches

Contract Awarded for Sign Planning, Design, and Fabrication

For the past year, intense efforts have been underway at Harpers Ferry Center to identify a private-sector firm that would become the sole supplier of signs to the National Park Service.

On Thursday, June 30, at ceremonies attended by NPS Associate Director Chris Jarvi, those efforts concluded in the signing of a contract with Bunting Graphics, Inc., of Verona, Pa.

Founded in 1980, Bunting Graphics is one of the nation's leading sign manufacturers, noted for its craftsmanship, project management skills, and its reliance on the latest sign fabrication technologies. Bunting is headquartered in western Pennsylvania near Pittsburgh, and has production facilities in Charlotte, North Carolina, as well as specialty subcontractors in North Carolina, Texas, California, Washington, Pennsylvania, and Oklahoma.

In addition to sign fabrication, the contract with Bunting provides access to a network of professional sign planning and design firms located in nine states in each region of the country. These firms offer a range of services, from the design of a single park entrance sign to the assessment of a park's complete signage needs and the development of a parkwide sign plan to address them. Additionally, the contract provides access to a number of sign related specialists including traffic engineers, landscape architects, human factors researchers, and visitor capacity and flow analysts.



As HFC Manager Gary Cummins and Deputy Associate Manager for Acquisition Management JoAnne Grove look on, Jody Bunting, President of Bunting Graphics, Inc. signs his company's contract with the NPS.

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The Long Road to a Contract Award

The search for a competent sign manufacturer was lengthy and extensive. In early Spring 2004, Harpers Ferry Center issued an RFI (Request for Information) that outlined how a private-sector firm might participate in the NPS Servicewide Sign Program. The document was reviewed by leading sign manufacturers, many of whom attended an “industry day” in June to discuss the proposal in person. Based on comments provided during these discussions, and received later in writing, HFC revised the RFI and reissued it as an RFP (Request for Proposal) in November 2004. The following February, technical and price proposals were submitted by a number of manufacturers and a review panel was convened in Harpers Ferry. The panel included representatives from the Center as well as several field personnel with experience in park or park sign program management.

The technical merits of each proposal were determined, with prices and other factors considered. A competitive range was established in May 2005. Negotiations were particularly complex, given the large number of possible sign sizes and materials. Before contract award, the firm’s manufacturing facilities were inspected, including a careful look at plant safety and environmental stewardship.

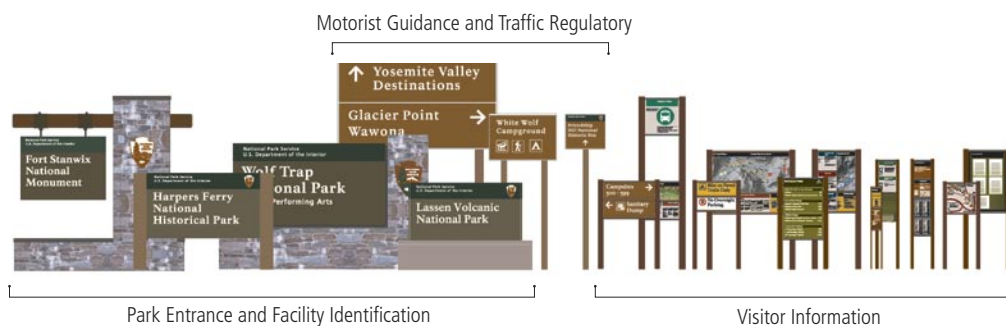
The proposal submitted by Bunting was very strong, and clearly indicated the firm’s

ability to competently fabricate a wide variety of signs. Examples were provided of many previous projects, including signs recently produced for the National Museum of the American Indian and the Smithsonian’s new National Air and Space Museum. In addition to considerable skills in sign fabrication, Bunting was noted for its deep regard for the National Park Service and its mission, and a strong commitment to the quality, value, and service that their contract with us will require.

A Single Source for NPS Signs

The contract with Bunting Graphics is a performance-based *requirements* relationship. This means that all signs purchased by the National Park Service must be acquired from Bunting, with the exception of signs needed for emergencies dealing with life, health, and/or safety. Historic entrance signs are also excluded. Signs are therefore no longer to be purchased from Federal Prison Industries (UNICOR) as previously required by federal regulations. New rulings require only that UNICOR be “considered” as a source, which was done during the formal procurement process. Comparisons of traffic regulatory and motorist guidance signs revealed that UNICOR’s prices were generally higher, and that delivery times were considerably longer.

The planning, design, and fabrication work of Bunting Graphics and its affiliates will be done in accordance with NPS UniGuide Sign Standards. These standards, approved in September 2003 by Director’s Order #52C, provide design and construction specifications for: park and facility identification signs; motorist guidance and traffic regulatory signs; visitor information signs which provide information about regulations, resource protection, interpretation, and safety; and a variety of accessories including brochure holders, trash bag dispensers, and bulletin cases.



New Employees

Raquel Gallardo

Raquel Gallardo is a new Project Manager with Workflow Management. Raquel began her career in the Park Service as a wide-eyed SCA intern at Grand Canyon National Park in 1991. It was a great experience, but she left at the end of the summer to complete her studies in English and geology at Virginia Tech. Raquel then went on to teach at the Catholic school that she had attended in her youth.

Drawn back to the vortex of the Grand Canyon, she returned to become a park ranger in 1993. She did interpretation on the rim and in the canyon. She was detailed to public affairs, assistant writer/editor, film permit coordinator, and anything else her branch could spare her for. She learned how to be comfortable talking in front of huge groups of people, to help people on the trails, and to even guide a helicopter to land safely.

When Raquel began working on interpretive media, she realized that she wanted to learn more about design. She decided to take leave to get another degree in graphic design at Arizona State University. She is now enjoying the experience of being the newest member of the Workflow Management team.

Krista Kovach

Krista Kovach joins HFC as an exhibit planner. Most recently, she worked as the Exhibits Coordinator for the Missouri Department of Conservation, supervising exhibits projects statewide. Krista is excited to join the National Park Service once again; she previously worked for the New Jersey Coastal Heritage Trail Route and as a seasonal interpreter at White Sands National Monument. Krista enjoys canoeing with her dog, flame-working glass, swing dancing, music, sailing tallships and working with foster kids.

Purchasing in volume from Bunting will ensure that:

- sign costs remain low while sign quality remains high.
- signs are consistent in appearance and content. A consistent appearance strengthens the Service's image as a single organization; consistent content ensures more rapid and more effective communication with park visitors.
- the Service can account for its considerable investment in signs far more responsibly than the current practice of buying from multiple sources at various prices and differing levels of quality.
- parks know that they have purchased an environmentally preferable product because of the specific requirements in this contract relating to the use of sustainable processes and materials.

Of course, relying on a single source for all signs will require that their performance be monitored carefully to ensure the quality of both product and service. The contract with Bunting includes frequent performance reports and reviews. In fact, the duration of the contract is wholly dependent on how the contractor performs. With continuous good results, the contract can extend up to ten years.

How to Place a Sign Order

Now that a source for signs has been determined, our attention must turn to developing procedures that will enable parks to order signs in the easiest and most efficient manner. The Internet will serve as the primary means by which parks learn about the standards and acquire signs. Information is already available by visiting the NPS Graphic Identity Program website (www.graphics.nps.gov) and clicking on "Sign Standards" in the green overbar. The site includes brief information about the standards and instructions to place orders by calling NPS Sign Program Manager Bob Clark at 304 535 5022 or Harpers Ferry Center at 304 535 5050.

Over the next several months, the website will grow to provide more extensive information about the various kinds of signs available, and a link to Bunting Graphics to allow direct orders of many kinds of signs. The eventual goal is to establish a rapid ordering process not unlike those used by other online shopping websites. Until a fully transactional process can be created, orders will be placed in more conventional ways using the information, phone contacts, and order forms available on the website as it evolves.

Working Together to Succeed

Obviously, much work remains to be done to establish an effective Service-wide sign program. With the addition of Bunting Graphics, the NPS has a competent partner committed to helping ensure that parks can purchase signs of good quality, at a reasonable price, and with minimal effort. The various offices at HFC will continue their efforts to help reach these goals. With a project of this magnitude, there will undoubtedly be various problems arising that will require our attention and your patience. With your understanding and your support, the National Park Service will have a sign program that we can all be proud of, and that will significantly strengthen our ability to communicate with park visitors clearly and consistently.

If you have questions or suggestions regarding how the program can best serve your particular needs, please call Bob Clark or HFC Associate Manager Phil Musselwhite at 304 535 6049.

The Servicewide Sign Management Program contract with Bunting Graphics is available on the Harpers Ferry Center website at www.nps.gov/hfc/acquisition/signs.htm.

New Employees

Caitlin McQuade

Caitlin McQuade has joined HFC as an exhibit planner. This is her first-ever federal job, and she has already confused TSP with ESP, and FEGLI with something unmentionable. Caitlin's museum career was inspired by her visit to a National Park Service site as a high-school junior.

Most recently, Caitlin freelanced as an interpretive and exhibit planner in St. Louis, Missouri; one of her clients was the Mark Twain Boyhood Home and Museum in Hannibal. She also taught in a graduate museum studies program. Caitlin was a planner and project manager for the Missouri Historical Society for nine years and, before that, helped develop exhibits at the Winterthur Museum in Wilmington, Delaware. She has an M.A. from the University of Delaware's Winterthur Program, and studied art history as an undergraduate at Yale.

Max Ramirez

Max Ramirez has accepted a term appointment as a new Audiovisual Production Assistant. Max most recently was a freelance still photographer and videographer – his clients have included Telemundo, the National Association of Hispanic Journalists, *Family Circle* and *Der Spiegel* magazines, and Black Star Publishing. He previously served as festival coordinator for the Cine Accion Latino Film Festival in San Francisco; network administrator for Latino.com; and director of photography for the Star Newspaper chain in Chicago. Max has a Bachelors degree in photography from the School of Visual Arts in New York, and a Masters in photography from San Francisco State University.

Max grew up in Puerto Rico, is fluent in Spanish, and is an active member of the National Association of Hispanic Journalists.

Planning & Designing Exhibits in 3-D

New Software Allows Visual Design & Development of Exhibit Spaces

The days of designing exhibit spaces on drafting paper with ruler and pencil are quickly disappearing. So too may be the use of traditional CAD software to plan and manipulate exhibit layouts in two dimensions. The advent of new software tools such as SketchUp and Autodesk VIS have dramatically altered the process of planning and designing exhibit spaces for the National Park Service

These new software tools allow designers to take traditional two-dimensional concept plans and convert them into three-dimensional images, and to then manipulate these images so the designs can be viewed from multiple angles and perspectives. The process brings exhibit spaces to life,

allowing both HFC exhibit designers and park staff to clearly visualize indoor exhibit spaces. Problems become easier to identify in both the concept phase and design phase of exhibit development, and alternatives are much easier to develop and explore.



Top right: Detail of an introductory exhibit at the Deshler Morris House Visitor Center. Using Autodesk VIS, HFC exhibit designer Don Branch is able to explore the realistic use of materials – in this case transparent tinted glass with graphics – during the exhibit design process. Illustrations like these help HFC exhibit planners and designers organize and scale the exhibit space and test various materials and lighting combinations.

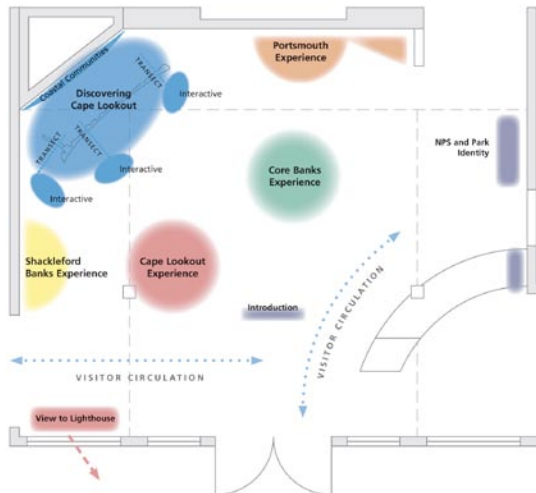
Below: Bird's eye view of proposed exhibits at the Deshler Morris House visitor center. The Deshler Morris House, in Germantown, Pa. served as George Washington's summer white house during 1793 and 1794.



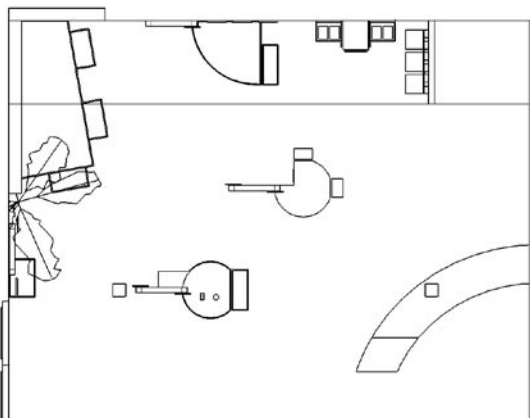
The accompanying images show the different types of illustrations used in the exhibit planning and design process, and demonstrate the important advantages of three-dimensional images for visualizing and comprehending indoor exhibit spaces.

Among the new exhibits HFC is developing with these software tools are the Harkers Island Visitor Center and Keeper's Quarters Exhibits at Cape Lookout National Seashore, the Yavapai Observation Station Exhibits at Grand Canyon National Park, the Great Falls Park Visitor Center, the Deshler Morris House exhibits at Independence NHP, and the Palo Alto Battlefield NHS Visitor Center.

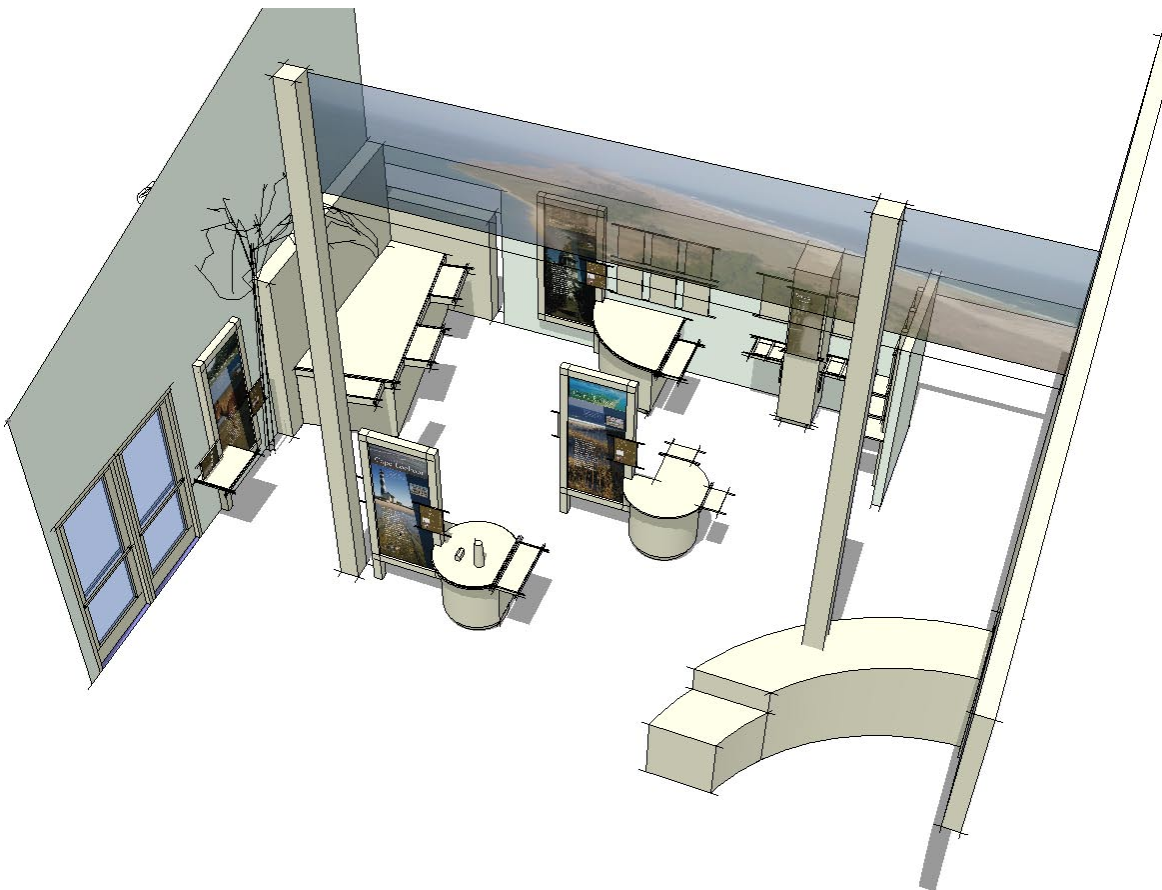
Below: Using SketchUp, HFC exhibit designer Chris Dearing has transformed the architectural floor plan (right) into a three dimensional view. Though not as detailed as the illustrations for the Deshler Morris House visitor center (previous page), this drawing still helps the exhibit team better convey the design intent.



Bubble plan from the schematic phase of exhibit planning for the Harkers Island Visitor Center at Cape Lookout National Seashore. This plan is used to show the amount of planned exhibit content and where the content will fit within the exhibit space.



This traditional architectural floor plan comprises the concept phase for the new exhibit. Rendered in two dimensions, it is often difficult to visualize the exhibit space and how the various exhibit elements will work together.



A Window into Our Past

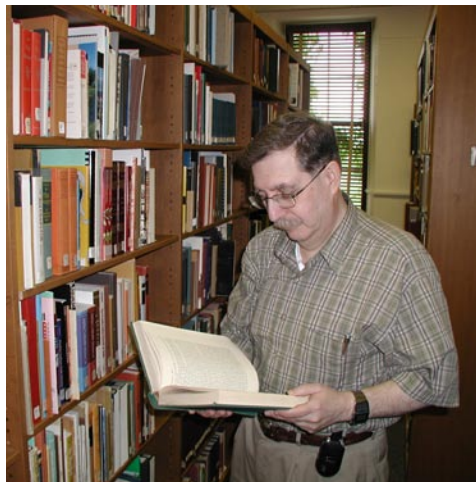
The HFC Library Holds Several Important NPS Collections

The advent of the Internet has put an unfathomable quantity of information at our fingertips. Often missing, however, are the ordinary private – and sometimes personal – records of individuals from our past.

The story of the National Park Service, for instance, is often hidden in the letters, memos, journals, and minutia of paperwork that have been produced by directors, curators, interpreters, and other leaders within our agency. In many cases, the volume of these records is just too great to transcribe and convert into digital format. And uncovering relationships between these many different documents can be a daunting and time-consuming task. Thankfully, there are archivists and librarians who spend a large part of their lives cataloging records like these so the rest of us can find them and, even more importantly, make sense of them.

Harpers Ferry Center is fortunate to have both an archivist and librarian in David Nathanson. Nathanson, who has worked at Harpers Ferry Center for over 30 years, has collected and cataloged records from across the National Park Service. Among the most notable collections he manages here at HFC are the papers of Harold L. Peterson, former chief curator of the National Park Service and world-renown authority on arms, armor, and military science; some of the papers, films from the 1920s, and taped interviews of Horace Albright, second director of the National Park Service; and the Ronald F. Lee Papers, which contain the records of an early chief historian, regional director, chief of interpretation of the National Park Service, and one of the founders of the National Trust for Historic Preservation. Nathanson has also catalogued the

records of key programs and events that have shaped the National Park Service, including the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC), the Mission 66 program (1955-1966), the National Parks Centennial (1972), and the American Revolution Bicentennial activities of the Service.



David Nathanson in the Harpers Ferry Center Library.

One of Nathanson's ongoing projects is "Sunshine and Shadows: A catalog of Civil War Unit Histories and Personal Narratives in National Park Service Libraries." With the aid and assistance of other park archivists and librarians, Nathanson assembled and published this catalog in 1986 where none had previously existed. The catalog evolved from typewritten pages in a three-ring binder to a searchable desktop database. Now this catalog, which today contains over 4,900 records, is available as a searchable Web application on the Harpers Ferry Center website (go to the Art, Graph-

Retirees

Gary Cummins

Gary Cummins, Manager of Harpers Ferry Center since 1997, retired on July 3, 2005, closing a 40-year career of public service with the federal government—including the U.S. Air Force, Defense Intelligence Agency, and National Park Service.

Cummins' career was marked by variety, including working as a high-altitude test subject for the Aero Space Medical Center at Wright-Patterson AFB, a university administrator, a National Park Service ranger, a missile system intelligence analyst, an archeologist, and superintendent at the USS Arizona Memorial, Cabrillo National Monument, Petrified Forest National Park, and Deputy Superintendent at Grand Canyon National Park.

Management of Harpers Ferry Center proved to be Cummins' greatest challenge. His work there was focused on trying to improve the business management climate without snuffing out the staff's creative energy. He oversaw more than a thousand interpretive media projects worth hundreds of millions of dollars during his tenure, including the traveling Lewis & Clark Corps of Discovery II exhibits, numerous award-winning videos, and major visitor center exhibits. Cummins was awarded the Department of the Interior's Meritorious Service Award in 2003.

Cummins holds a BA and MA (history) from the University of Montana and an MA (anthropology/archeology) from the University of Arizona. His wife Diana and he recently celebrated their 37th wedding anniversary and are the parents of three sons, Gavin, Corbett, and Patrick. After retirement, the Cummins will move to Port Townsend, Washington.

ics & Library Services page at www.nps.gov/hfc/products/knowledge.htm and select the HFC Library Databases link under Library). Says Nathanson, “Most of the updating I do to this database is comprised of references the HFC Library owns or has copies of. I have not requested that Civil War parks update their holdings in the database, but I would happily accept new citations and information from NPS offices and park sites.” In addition to maintaining “Sunshine and Shadows,” Nathanson frequently assists researchers who want to tap into this vast storehouse of Civil War history.

Two other Web applications Nathanson maintains that relate directly to the National Park Service are the “Publishing History of the Courier” and an index of “NPS Articles.” The *Courier* provides a wonderful snapshot of NPS operations until 1993, covering a variety of topics on NPS employees, news, operations, and programs. Nathanson’s catalog indexes this newsletter from 1977 until publica-

tion was discontinued in 1993. The “NPS Articles” catalog indexes articles appearing in magazines and journals that pertain to National Park Service areas or topics.

To view the numerous NPS collections that presently have been cataloged, and to explore the details of each individual collection, browse to the NPS History Collection Inventories on the HFC website (go to the Art, Graphics & Library Services page at www.nps.gov/hfc/products/knowledge.htm and select the HFC History Collection Inventories link under Library). For research assistance, or to obtain copies of specific documents or records, contact David Nathanson (email: David_Nathanson@nps.gov; phone: 304-535-6262).

HFC Meets Another Deadline
Indoor wayside exhibit produced in record time

Congratulations to John Demer, Betsy Ehrlich, Angie Faulkner, Sarah Heald, Rich Helman, Bruce Kaiser, Larry Matson, Lisa Royse, and Ed Zahniser for their speedy work on a new indoor exhibit for Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor. This partnership site covers 524 miles in Upstate New York, including four navigable waterways (the Erie, Champlain, Oswego, and Cayuga-Seneca canals), sections of the original Erie Canal, and over 200 adjacent municipalities. The 27-member Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor Commission works with federal, state, and local authorities in creating and implementing a corridor plan that fosters the integration of canal-related historical, cultural, recreational, scenic, economic, and community development initiatives.

The indoor wayside exhibit was needed for the June 1, 2005 dedication of a new visitor center in Lockport, N.Y. by U.S. Representative Thomas Reynolds. Reynolds sponsored the legislation to fund this new multi-partner facility. Lisa Royse (Workflow Management) spearheaded the project from its inception. Angie Faulkner (Design & Cartography) developed and modified designs many, many times. Larry Matson (Media Production) specified the exhibit mount and placed the order. Bruce Kaiser (Media Production) put the order for the panel on a fast-track. Erie Canalway superintendent Frank Dean and staff members Marcia Kees and Hannah Blake also provided considerable assistance in the form of exhibit text and graphics. The result was a delivery on time and within budget.

This indoor wayside exhibit is just one small part of a larger project that will include an official park brochure, wayside exhibits, and indoor exhibits.

From the Manager — continued from page 1

The delivery of information for visitors’ well-being and understanding is what the National Park Service does best. It sets the National Park Service apart from other land-management agencies in the eyes of the voting and tax-paying public. If done well, it can convert visitors into stewards and their sense of responsibility into actions that will help us preserve this great nation’s natural and cultural heritage.

This will be my last contribution to **HFC onMEDIA** as I enter retirement on July 3. After more than thirty years with the National Park Service, there are an infinite number of experiences, both positive and negative, to tempt me to go on and on....but I won’t. I will only say that I believe public service is an honorable way of life and that my good fortune, which has allowed me to carry out that life with the National Park Service, has been a privilege. Keep on fighting the good fights and doing the good work. The many generations to come will thank you long after you’re gone – not a bad legacy to aspire to.



— Gary Cummins