



## BOSTON AFRICAN AMERICAN NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE CELEBRATES QUARTER CENTURY

ON OCTOBER 10, 1980, Congress established Boston African American National Historic Site to preserve and interpret the sites and structures affiliated with the history of free nineteenth-century African-Americans who lived and worked on Boston's Beacon Hill. Boston saw the development of a free black community on the north slope of Beacon Hill, which soon led the nation in the early battles for civil rights, equal schools for black children, the abolition movement, and the Underground Railroad.

The site includes fifteen pre-Civil War structures relating to the history of Boston's nineteenth-century African-American community. The sites are linked by the 1.6-mile Black Heritage Trail, featuring the Abiel Smith School, Augustus Saint-Gaudens' memorial to Robert Gould Shaw and the African-American Massachusetts 54th Regiment, and the African Meeting House, the oldest standing African-American church in the United States and the social and political center of this community.

According to local author and historian Susan Wilson, in her book, *Boston Sites & Insights* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2004), the genesis of Boston African American National Historic Site began with the arrival in Boston of Howard and Sue Bailey Thurman in 1953. According to Wilson, "Howard Thurman became the first black chaplain at Boston University, and in that role provided inspiration for the young Martin Luther King Jr. Sue Bailey Thurman helped found the Negro Freedom Trails of Boston, forerunners of today's Museum of Afro-American History and the Black Heritage Trail."

At around the same time, Wilson writes, "J. Marcus Mitchell and his wife, Gaunzetta—who had moved to Boston in 1947—had a similar plan. Marcus Mitchell had helped create an artists' group called the Boston Negro Artists Association. In trying to formulate ways to celebrate the Emancipation Proclamation's centennial, Mitchell organized history and art exhibits and set up another trail that followed black art and history in Boston." Sometime around 1964, the Mitchells and Mrs. Thurman met. "Within a relatively short time, Sue Bailey Thurman's first dream became reality. The



*The establishment of Boston African American NHS was announced in the June 1981 issue of THE BROADSIDE, the last issue of the original run of this publication.*

American Museum of Negro History opened, with the Charles Street Meeting House as its home and Marcus Mitchell as curator and director." (In the late 1960s, the name of the museum was changed to the Museum of Afro-American History.) The second dream, developing the black version of Boston's Freedom Trail, followed naturally, and in May 1968, Marcus Mitchell led a crowd of approximately 400 people on the first tour of the Black Heritage Trail.

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## Boston African American NHS Celebrates Quarter Century

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Meanwhile, Wilson writes, “Henry Hampton, executive producer of the documentary *Eyes on the Prize* and honorary chair of the Museum of Afro-American History, discovered that the old African Meeting House—which had been used as a synagogue on Beacon Hill since the turn of the century—was coming up for sale. Knowing local black historian and longtime state representative Byron Rushing’s reputation as an ace fundraiser, Hampton asked him to join the cause.” The initiative was a success, and the museum purchased the Meeting House in 1972.

Wilson notes that, “these events had major effects on the Black Heritage Trail. The fact that the African Meeting House—the trail’s major site and the only trail structure owned by the museum—was a National Historic Landmark gave the tour added prestige. That, in turn, helped attract people involved in Boston’s U.S. bicentennial celebrations, as well as the National Park Service.”

Wilson concludes, “In 1980, the historic credentials of the trail were further enhanced when an act of Congress made these Beacon Hill stops the Boston African American National Historic Site. A new brochure was



Shortly after the passage of the act establishing Boston African American NHS, Byron Rushing (center, in tan raincoat), then the director of the Museum of Afro-American History, led park staff on a tour of the Black Heritage Trail. Both of these views were taken at the Shaw/54th Mass. Memorial on the Boston Common.

developed, and by 1982 the museum and the National Park Service had begun a cooperative partnership that endures to this day.”

—SEAN HENNESSEY

Editor’s Note: Susan Wilson’s book, *Boston Sites & Insights*, is available at bookstores in Boston NHP visitor centers. For further information, please see Ms. Wilson’s website:

[www.susanwilsonphoto.com/News](http://www.susanwilsonphoto.com/News)

## National Park Service Honors Five Massachusetts Teachers With “Excellence in Interpretation” Awards

ON JUNE 28, 2005, Boston National Historical Park Superintendent Terry Savage announced that five local Massachusetts teachers have won the prestigious National Park Service “Excellence in Interpretation” award. The teachers received the awards for their contributions in developing the education program *Twisted Strands: Simple Machines and Rope Making in the Charlestown Navy Yard*. Funded through the National Park Service’s *Parks as Classroom* program, *Twisted Strands* introduces elementary school teachers and students to simple machines, such as those that were used to make rope in the Charlestown Navy Yard for most of the nineteenth century.

In his poem “The Ropewalk,” Henry Wadsworth Longfellow likened ropemakers to “human spiders” who spin their threads into rope. Like those “human spiders,” Carol Airasian from Watertown, Karen Flanagan from Leominster, Katherine Hillson from Braintree, Noreen O’Connell from Cambridge, and Marilyn Zavorski from Stow worked with



Three of the five award recipients pose with Park Rangers Dan Gagnon and Sheila Cooke-Kayser on the caisson for Dry Dock 1. From left to right are Carol Airasian, Dan Gagnon, Sheila Cooke-Kayser, Marilyn Zavorski (holding award), and Noreen O’Connell.

National Park Service rangers to weave the Massachusetts curriculum standards in history, science/technology, and English Language Arts into a program filled with a variety of hands-on learning activities for their students.

At the start of the program, the teachers attended a two-day workshop to prepare their students for the on-site activities. The students were then brought to the Charlestown Navy Yard in Boston National

Historical Park to learn about rope making technology and to make their own rope using simple machines. The students then boarded the World War II ship *USS Cassin Young* to search for other “simple machines.”

To learn more about this and other National Park Service education programs, please contact Sheila Cooke-Kayser at (617) 242-5688 or [sheila\\_cooke-kayser@nps.gov](mailto:sheila_cooke-kayser@nps.gov).

—SHEILA COOKE-KAYSER

## National Park Service Breaks Ground for \$3.7 Million Bunker Hill Makeover

FRIENDS AND SUPPORTERS gathered at the base of the Bunker Hill Monument on June 13, 2005, to mark the beginning of a renovation project to restore the 221-foot-tall obelisk to its position as one of the city's most recognized historic landmarks on Boston's Freedom Trail. Plans include the rehabilitation of a former Boston branch library into a multi-purpose museum and visitor center, which will offer diverse audiences a unique experience of history through exhibits and educational programs.

The project is funded in part by a \$500,000 gift from the Grand Lodge of Masons in Massachusetts and marks the first significant rehabilitation of this icon of the American Revolution in decades. The donation of lighting by Osram Sylvania will conserve energy, improve public safety and enhance the appearance of the monument and the museum interior, while highlighting several architectural features. The new illumination eventually will spotlight the historic landmark's visual prominence in the Boston skyline.

Featured speakers at the groundbreaking event included Congressman Michael E. Capuano, Boston Mayor Thomas M. Menino, National Park Service Regional Director Mary A. Bomar, Grand Master Jeffrey Black Hodgdon, and Martin Goetzler, Chief Executive Officer of Osram Sylvania. The event also included remarks from representatives of the Bunker Hill Monument Association and the Charlestown Historical Society.

"Bunker Hill is an important part of our city's great history," said Mayor Menino. "This museum will help to continue to bring tourism dollars to the Charlestown community, as well as recognize that neighborhood's place in our history. You could say we are opening a new chapter on an old book."

"The restoration will provide improved accessibility to the Bunker Hill Monument and protect the site for future generations," said Terry Savage, Superintendent of Boston National Historical Park. "The generous gift from the Grand Lodge of Masons and Osram Sylvania to the National Park Service demonstrates a profound understanding of the importance of historic preservation to maintain a vital and vibrant community."

Built between 1825 and 1843, Bunker Hill is one of the oldest major commemorative monuments in the United States. The site of the June 17, 1775, battle attracts 200,000 visitors each year.



*The participants in the June 13 groundbreaking pose for the camera. From left to right are Martin Goetzler, CEO of Osram Sylvania; Arthur Hurley, Charlestown Historical Society; Jim Conway, Bunker Hill Monument Association; Superintendent Terry W. Savage, Boston National Historical Park; Northeast Regional Director Mary Bomar; Grand Master Jeffrey Black Hodgdon, Grand Lodge of Masons in Massachusetts; Congressman Michael E. Capuano; and Boston Mayor Thomas M. Menino.*

The Bunker Hill Monument site includes the Bunker Hill Lodge, four acres of surrounding grounds, and the adjacent Bunker Hill Museum. The Bunker Hill Museum building, an historic three-story brick structure located in Monument Square, is owned by the City of Boston and has been used by the Charlestown Historical Society to present the community's rich history.

"Here, where this nation's forefathers fought the first major battle of the American

Revolution, Osram is honored to help preserve and illuminate history," said Martin Goetzler, Chief Executive Officer of Osram Sylvania. "We hope that the spotlight on Bunker Hill will always inspire Americans to remember the rich struggle for independence and dedication to freedom begun on this very spot 230 years ago."

—SEAN HENNESSEY



*The media was well represented among the crowd who attended the groundbreaking ceremony.*

# 60th Anniversary of the End of World War II

SIXTY YEARS AGO, World War II ended with the surrender of Germany and Japan to the Allies. In honor of this anniversary, THE BROADSIDE presents a selection of images from the Charlestown Navy Yard at the end of World War II.

The Navy Yard had changed considerably during the six years since President Franklin D. Roosevelt had declared a state of emergency in September 1939. From under 6,000 employees, it had grown to an all-time peak of 50,128 on June 30, 1943, many of whom were women and minorities. While employment had dropped to only a little over 36,000 by V-E day, the yard remained busy constructing tank landing ships and servicing hundreds of battle-scarred warships and auxiliaries. And World War II had seen the construction of an entirely new shipyard annex around the South Boston Dry Dock, which had been under-utilized prior to the war.

While most people who worked at the yard in 1945 recognized that peacetime would see cutbacks, none could predict that in less than thirty years the yard which had built, in terms of numbers, more ships than any other navy yard during the war, would be closed as obsolete and unnecessary.

*The May 8, 1945, surrender of Germany was a moment for shipyard workers to enjoy. But, as the front page of the May 19, 1945, issue of the yard's employee newspaper indicated, victory in Europe was only a part of the story. In the Pacific the Navy was involved in the arduous campaign to capture Okinawa, and the possibility of an even bloodier invasion of Japan itself remained on the horizon. (BOSTS-13352)*



*A little over three months later, on August 14, the war was finally over. The editors of the Navy Yard News chose the image above to capture the sense of peace and relief that people felt on V-J Day. (BOSTS-13352)*

## 60th Anniversary of the End of World War II



Although suffering a little deterioration, this rare color aerial photograph taken on July 3, 1945, shows the Charlestown Navy Yard at the end of World War II. Note how the yard is jammed with buildings and equipment, with the only open space being the areas of the Marine Barracks Parade Ground, the Commandant's House, and the yard's Flagpole. The Bunker Hill Monument is visible in the middle of the left side, while USS Constitution can be seen at Pier 10 at the eastern end of the yard. (BOSTS-8615)



During the war, the newspaper had documented the changing face of the yard's workforce. The January 14, 1943, issue featured not "Rosie the Riveter" but "Peggy the Welder." Articles such as this one were intended to promote the morale of workers on the homefront and their acceptance of social change in what had always been an almost exclusively male trade. (BOSTS-13352)

### About the News

From January 1936 to March 1974, the *Boston Navy Yard News* (after November 1945, the *Boston Naval Shipyard News*) provided yard employees with a mix of information on happenings in the yard and in the work and private lives of yard workers. A complete file of the paper, from which most of the illustrations in this article have come, is one of the most important items in the archival collection of Boston National Historical Park.



What opportunities yard workers had for a temporary break from their hard work often had war-related purposes. Here, they are being entertained by actor James Cagney in October 1943 as part of a rally to encourage purchase of war bonds. (BOSTS-13352)

## The Secret Ark of Icon Park

THE FIFTH COLLABORATION between the Institute of Contemporary Art (ICA) and the National Park Service (NPS) featured *The Secret Ark of Icon Park* by Jerry Beck, on display at the Charlestown Navy Yard from July to October 2005. Through the Artist-in-Residence Program at Boston National Historical Park, the ICA and the NPS annually invite New England artists to create new works of art that explore Boston's historical themes.

During his residency with the ICA and the NPS, Jerry Beck created a unique visual environment for the Charlestown Navy Yard in an area adjacent to USS *Constitution*. Beck's work was reminiscent of an ark made with industrial, military, and maritime materials, some borrowed from the Navy Yard. Placed among the powerful and historic ships in the Navy Yard, Beck's Ark symbolized our country's need to focus on self discovery in difficult times. According to Beck, the Ark was built for a country "caught in a web of sound bites, slogans, superficial sacred texts, and media monsters" and helped to address our nation's constant state of fear and critical loss of innocence since September 11, 2001.

Beck's 64-foot-long boat-like structure called to mind Noah's biblical voyage, suggesting safe harbor in a hostile world. While some of the elements spoke of imminent danger, the exhibit also hinted at the need for optimism, borrowing imagery from American



carnivals and arcades and incorporating the ideas of inspirational figures. Beck ran a series of workshops with local schools in which students created lifeboat-like forms made of rope, filling them with items related to their families and hopes for the future. This work became part of *The Secret Ark*.

Jerry Beck is the founder and artistic director of the Revolving Museum, now located in Lowell, Massachusetts. Beck's personal artistic vision is marked by a great love of the humbler aspects of the American landscape. His work is often executed with the creative use of recycled and found materials that evoke the American vernacular.

The Artist-in-Residence Program was featured in the Fall 2005 issue of *Common Ground: Preserving Our Nation's Heritage*, published by the National Park Service for the heritage community. This article, which highlights past exhibits, may be read online at: [www.cr.nps.gov/CommonGround](http://www.cr.nps.gov/CommonGround).

For further information on the program, contact Carole Anne Meehan at the Institute of Contemporary Art at (617) 927-6615 or go to the ICA web site: [www.icaboston.org](http://www.icaboston.org).

—STEPHEN P. CARLSON

## Mimi LaCamera Named President of Freedom Trail Foundation

IN JULY 2005 the Freedom Trail Foundation announced that it had appointed Mimi LaCamara to succeed Linda McConchie as its new leader. Ms. LaCamara assumed the role of President of the Foundation in September. "The Freedom Trail Foundation is very fortunate to have enlisted someone of Mimi's standing who brings both knowledge and love of Boston and its history and a distinguished career in non-profit leadership and visitor marketing," said Foundation Chairman Louis Miller of the Boston law firm Choate, Hall and Stewart.

Ms. LaCamara served for the last nine years as Director of Visitor Marketing for the Greater Boston Convention and Visitors Bureau (GBCVB) where she created the nationally recognized "Boston Restaurant Week," "Boston Overnight," and "Summer in the City" promotions, and served as senior manager of the Boston Common Visitor Center. Prior to her work with the GBCVB, Ms. La Camera served for seven years as Executive



Director of the Lupus Foundation of Massachusetts, and served for nine years as Direc-

tor of Marketing for Wide Horizons for Children (formerly International Adoptions) in Waltham, Massachusetts.

"We look forward to working with a veteran of the local non-profit world who has such legendary marketing prowess," said Boston National Historical Park Superintendent Terry Savage. "Mimi can reposition the Freedom Trail to claim its place as one of the nation's preeminent destinations," Savage added.

Ms. La Camera is a former member of the Freedom Trail Foundation Board. During her tenure, she initiated and raised the funds for portable digital playback devices and headphones that visitors use for guided audio tours of the Freedom Trail. She currently serves on the advisory board of the Emerald Necklace Conservancy and on the Board of Directors of Save the Harbor Save the Bay. She and her husband, Paul LaCamera, reside in Boston's Back Bay.

—SEAN HENNESSEY

## 69th Commanding Officer Assumes Duties On Board “Old Ironsides”

IN A CEREMONY AT SEA aboard USS *Constitution* on July 30, Commander Thomas C. Graves, USN, relieved Commander Lewin C. Wright, becoming the 69th person to command the 207-year-old warship. Wright will move on to the Navy staff at the Pentagon in Washington.

In his speech, Wright addressed Graves, acknowledging his new status as “former commanding officer” and relating the potential fear of his future visits to “old salts” telling a captain how to run his ship. “In Episode IV, after Obi Wan dies, he comes back as a wise figure showing Luke how to use ‘the Force’,” he said, referring to the *Star Wars* movies. “Tom, when you depart today, you will know that ‘the Force’ will be with you.”

Graves’ speech, in turn, recognized Wright’s accomplishments as the commanding officer and *Constitution*’s status as “the greatest ship in the world.” He relayed his simple plan: “Keep it that way.”

Graves graduated from the United States Naval Academy in 1987 with a B.S. in Physical Science. He was promoted to the rank of Commander in May 2003.

Following the Division Officer Course in Newport, R.I., he reported to USS *Barney*



Commander Thomas C. Graves salutes as he boards USS *Constitution* at the start of her Change of Command cruise.

(DDG-6) to serve as the Damage Control Assistant and Auxiliary Officer. In 1990 he reported to USS *Dwight D. Eisenhower* (CVN-69) and served as Electrical Officer.

In 1992 he was assigned to Naval Post-

graduate School where he received an MS in Computer Science.

Upon completion of the Department Head Course in 1995, he was assigned as Engineering Officer in USS *Underwood* (FFG-36). In 1997 he reported to USS *Philippine Sea* (CG-58) where he served as Engineering Officer and was an active participant in NATO Operation Allied Force.

In June 1999, Graves was assigned as the OPNAV N76 Fellow to the Center for Naval Analyses (CNA) in Alexandria, Va.

After completing the Executive Officer training pipeline, Graves reported to USS *Boone* (FFG-28) for duties as Executive officer in June 2001. He participated in Operation Enduring Freedom and received the Battle “E.”

In August 2002, Commander Graves was assigned to the Assessment Division (N81) in the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations.

Commander Graves’ personal awards include the Navy Meritorious Service Medal, Navy Commendation Medal (7 awards), the Army Commendation Medal, and the Navy Achievement Medal (2 awards).

—JO1(SW) MATTHEW CHABE  
USS CONSTITUTION

### BNHP News Notes

- Congratulations to Supervisory Park Ranger **Ethan Beeler** and his wife **Johanna** on the July 14 birth of their son, **Jonathan Thomas Linehan Beeler**.
- Our condolences to carpenter **David Fusconi** on the recent loss in his family.
- Exhibit specialist **Robert Laws** retired in April, while Purchasing Agent **Stanley Radomski** retired in June.
- Contract Specialist **Bob Stachowski** has transferred to Boston NHP from the regional contracting office.
- HMCS(SS) **Donald B. Abele, Jr.**, reported on board USS *Constitution* as Command Senior Chief in June. He relieved ETCM(SS/DSW) **Steven H. Brandt**, who has retired after a 20-year Navy career.
- The *People and Places* Teacher Institute in July was a great success. Eighteen local Massachusetts teachers attended the workshop, which this year added Boston Harbor Islands and the Native American story to its agenda.
- Several Maintenance Division employees were called out to help in emergency situations this summer. In August, **Mike O'Donoghue**, **Angel Roman**, and **Victor Roman** fought western wildfires, while in September **Wally Cormier** assisted FEMA clean-up efforts in the wake of hurricane Katrina at Alexandria, La.
- The National Moment of Remembrance on Memorial Day was observed with brief moments of silence at Bunker Hill and on board USS *Cassin Young*.
- The Department of Defense World War II 60th Anniversary Salute to Veterans took place on Pier 1 on June 18. In conjunction with this observance, preserved USS *LST-325* spent two weeks at Pier 4.
- Other visiting ships this summer included the Chilean tall ship *Esmaralda*.
- The USS *Constitution* Museum presented its Charles Francis Adams award to Acting Deputy Secretary of Defense and Secretary of the Navy **Gordon England** at its annual meeting in September.
- Education Specialist **Sheila Cooke-Kayser**, who recently completed a detail with the Northeast Center for Education Services, and Park Ranger **Dan Gagnon**, along with Old South Meeting House Education Director **Michelle Le Blanc** and teacher **Marilyn Zvorski** presented a session at an October 21 Teaching Local History Conference at Plymouth State University.

### Historic Well Found



IN EARLY JULY archeologists from the Public Archeological Laboratory, Inc., of Providence, R.I., discovered the intact remains of one of the wells which had provided fresh water for the Marine Barracks in the Navy Yard during the first half of the 19th century.

The archeological work was being done in conjunction with the ongoing rehabilitation of the Barracks. The well is in what is now the sally port of the structure but which had originally been an open courtyard. Plans of the area indicate that the well was abandoned shortly after the introduction of piped water into the yard in the early 1860s.

The well has been extensively documented and will be preserved in place.

—STEPHEN P. CARLSON

UNITED STATES  
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE  
BOSTON NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK  
CHARLESTOWN NAVY YARD  
BOSTON, MA 02129-4543

OFFICIAL BUSINESS



## THE BROADSIDE

NUMBER 2, 2005

### Park Sites & Partners

#### **Boston Marine Society**

Building 32, Charlestown Navy Yard  
[www.bostonmarinesociety.org](http://www.bostonmarinesociety.org)  
617-242-0522

#### **Bunker Hill Monument**

Monument Sq., Charlestown  
[www.nps.gov/bost/Bunker\\_Hill.htm](http://www.nps.gov/bost/Bunker_Hill.htm)  
617-242-5641

#### **Charlestown Navy Yard Visitor Center**

55 Constitution Rd., Charlestown  
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617-242-5675

#### **Old North Church**

(Christ Church in the City of Boston)  
193 Salem St., Boston  
[www.oldnorth.org](http://www.oldnorth.org)  
617-523-6676

#### **Old South Meeting House**

(Old South Association)  
310 Washington St., Boston  
[www.oldsouthmeetinghouse.org](http://www.oldsouthmeetinghouse.org)  
617-482-6439

#### **Old State House**

(Managed by The Bostonian Society)  
206 Washington St., Boston  
[www.bostonhistory.org](http://www.bostonhistory.org)  
617-720-3292

#### **Paul Revere House**

(Paul Revere Memorial Association)  
19 North Sq., Boston  
[www.paulreverehouse.org](http://www.paulreverehouse.org)  
617-523-2338

#### **USS Constitution**

(U.S. Navy)  
Pier 1, Charlestown Navy Yard  
[www.usconstitution.navy.mil](http://www.usconstitution.navy.mil)  
617-242-7511

#### **USS Constitution Museum**

(USS Constitution Museum Foundation)  
Building 22, Charlestown Navy Yard  
[www.usconstitutionmuseum.org](http://www.usconstitutionmuseum.org)  
617-426-1812

### Did you know ...?

That the African Meeting House, the focal point of Boston African American NHS, will celebrate its bicentennial in 2006.

THE BROADSIDE, the information bulletin of the Boston National Historical Park, is produced quarterly by Boston National Historical Park, Charlestown Navy Yard, Boston, MA 02129-4543. Contributions are welcomed from all employees of the park and its cooperators. Except as otherwise credited, all photographs are by NPS staff or from park archives.

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*Managing Editor* – Stephen Carlson  
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*Staff Photographer* – Richard Tourangeau

Boston National Historical Park  
National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior

### A Tradition Renewed



ON SEPTEMBER 13, 2005, the tradition of taking group photographs of Navy Yard personnel was renewed when members of the staff of the USS Constitution Museum (left, in red shirts), the crew of USS Constitution (center, in whites), and employees of Boston National Historical Park (right) posed together in front of USS Constitution on Pier 1. (U.S. Navy photo)