



Foundation Document Overview

Adams National Historical Park

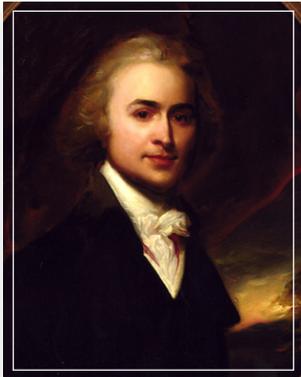
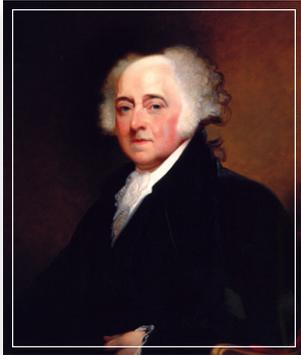
Massachusetts



Contact Information

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Purpose



The purpose of ADAMS NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK is to preserve, protect, maintain, and interpret the homes, Stone Library, and grounds in Quincy, Massachusetts, of second President of the United States John Adams and his wife Abigail Adams, sixth President of the United States John Quincy Adams and his wife Louisa Catherine Adams, and subsequent generations of the Adams family.



Significance

Significance statements express why Adams National Historical Park resources and values are important enough to merit national park unit designation. Statements of significance describe why an area is important within a global, national, regional, and systemwide context. These statements are linked to the purpose of the park unit, and are supported by data, research, and consensus. Significance statements describe the distinctive nature of the park and inform management decisions, focusing efforts on preserving and protecting the most important resources and values of the park unit.

- Adams National Historical Park encompasses the birthplaces, burial place, and the Old House at Peace field and Stone Library of the first father-son Presidents John and John Quincy Adams, and provides opportunities to connect with the places that shaped the lives and ideas of the statesmen who, through lengthy domestic and international public service, had a profound and lasting influence on United States nation building, constitutional theory, and international diplomacy.
- With Peace field as a touchstone, Presidents John Adams and John Quincy Adams, first ladies Abigail Adams and Louisa Catherine Adams, Ambassador Charles Francis Adams, historians Henry Adams, Brooks Adams, Charles Francis Adams, Jr., and Clover Adams made distinguished contributions in public and private service and in American literature, arts, and intellectual life.
- Four generations of the Adams family made intentional efforts to steward the family legacy, homestead, landscape, furnishings, books, manuscripts, and other objects to shape how history remembered their contributions to the nation's political, cultural, and intellectual history.



Fundamental Resources and Values

Fundamental resources and values are those features, systems, processes, experiences, stories, scenes, sounds, smells, or other attributes determined to merit primary consideration during planning and management processes because they are essential to achieving the purpose of the park and maintaining its significance.

- **Historic Structures at the Old House at Peace Field, 135 Adams Street, Quincy.**
 - Old House at Peace field
 - Stone Library
 - Adams Carriage House
 - Wood Shed
 - Doghouse
 - Greenhouse
- **John and John Quincy Adams Birthplaces, 133 and 141 Franklin Street, Quincy.**
- **Cultural Landscape of Old House.**
- **Cultural Landscape of Adams Birthplaces.**
- **Museum Collections and Archives.**
- **Archeological Resources.**

Adams National Historical Park contains other resources and values that may not be fundamental to the purpose and significance of the park, but are important to consider in management and planning decisions. These are referred to as other important resources and values.

- **Beale Estate.**
- **Adams National Historical Park Visitor Center, 1250 Hancock Street, Quincy.**



Interpretive Themes

Interpretive themes are often described as the key stories or concepts that visitors should understand after visiting a park—they define the most important ideas or concepts communicated to visitors about a park unit. Themes are derived from—and should reflect—park purpose, significance, resources, and values. The set of interpretive themes is complete when it provides the structure necessary for park staff to develop opportunities for visitors to explore and relate to all of the park significances and fundamental resources and values.

- **At Home and Abroad.** Members of the Adams family, both men and women, played an important role on the national and international stage on behalf of the United States during the formative years of the republic.
- **Public Lives, Private Lives.** Generations of Adamses maintained a family ethos of public service, patriotism, education, intellectual achievement, and privileged lineage, which shaped their careers, ideas, achievements, and private lives.
- **Legacy and Remembrance.** Presidents John and John Quincy Adams helped shape the early republic and a national culture and American identity. The Adams family's awareness and concern about their legacy has played out in both family and outside historians' interpretations of the family's contributions in shaping the national discourse.



Description

Adams National Historical Park in Quincy, Massachusetts, preserves and interprets the homes where John Adams, the second President of the United States, and his son, John Quincy Adams, the sixth President of the United States, were each born. The park also preserves and interprets the estate known as Peace field lived in by John Adams and his wife Abigail Adams, their son John Quincy Adams and his wife Louisa Catherine Adams, and subsequent generations of the Adams family, including U.S. Ambassador to Great Britain Charles Francis Adams and historians Henry Adams, Brooks Adams, and Charles Francis Adams, Jr.

In 1946, the Adams Memorial Society, Inc., donated to the people of the United States all the articles of personal property consisting of some 20,000 items and the real estate at 135 Adams Street, Quincy, Massachusetts, “to be preserved and maintained as a place of historic and public interest and as an educational exhibit and not for profit, and with the purpose of fostering civic virtue and patriotism . . .” The deed also specified that the historic house site would perpetuate the memory of the four generations of the Adams family who occupied Peace field from 1788 to 1927. According to the 1946 deed of gift, “as long as said society (Adams Memorial) shall continue in existence none of the articles of personal property hereby transferred shall be removed from said premises without the written approval of said Society, and if any of said articles are not desired to be kept or used on said premises or are removed wherefrom without such approval the same shall revert to said Society and be returned to it.”

A 1946 secretarial order subsequently established Adams Mansion National Historic Site. Additional land (0.72 acres) was added to the original site (4.06 acres) in 1952 and the name was changed to Adams National Historic Site. In 1972, Congress authorized the addition of the neighboring Beale Estate (3.68 acres), and, in 1978, Congress authorized acceptance of a donation of the John Adams Birthplace and the John Quincy Adams Birthplace from the City of Quincy. In 1998, Congress designated the site as Adams National Historical Park.

In 1980, Public Law 96-435 authorized the Secretary of the Interior to accept the conveyance of the United First Parish Church in Quincy, Massachusetts, the burial place of John Adams, Abigail Adams, John Quincy Adams, and Louisa Catherine Adams, to be administered as part of the Adams National Historic Site. Although locating the church within the park boundary, this legislation provided assurance of no violation of separation of church and state.

This conveyance has never taken place. The United First Parish Church owns and manages all of the church except for the burial crypt, which is owned by the Board of Supervisors comprising members of the Adams Memorial Society. Through a memorandum of understanding with the United First Parish Church, the park provided interpretive tours at the church from 1994 to 1998.

