



# The Quarterly

## Hurricane Isabel Recovery Continues

Hurricane Isabel's intensity had dropped only slightly by the time she reached central Virginia. Fortunately the Maggie L. Walker National Historic Site resources were relatively unharmed, but the storm did not spare Richmond National Battlefield Park. Every unit of the park received some damage, and the Fort Harrison area alone lost approximately 1500 trees. Clean-up crews from across the United States were sent to the park and quickly opened roads and assessed damage to quantify future projects.

The impact was so severe that the recovery effort continues half a year later. Many large trees that fell across park roads were immediately removed, but others that walloped irreplaceable historic earthworks had to wait until the appropriate equipment was available to remove the trees safely without damaging

park resources. This work has begun at Fort Johnson, which is located along Battlefield Park Road in Varina.

Damage from the storm impacted 27 parks in three regions extending from the North Carolina coast to beyond Pennsylvania. To assist in the recovery 623 people were sent to the most heavily damaged sites. At one time more than 50 folks from other parks and agencies worked primarily along Battlefield Park Road. This effort did not go unnoticed. The park received many compliments from neighbors who were appreciative of the work that returned life almost to normal in a short amount of time. These types of incidents that require mutual



A crane lifts trees off of the earthworks of Fort Johnson, which was heavily damaged during Hurricane Isabel last fall.

assistance illustrate that one of the greatest strengths of the National Park Service is our dedicated and capable staff.

## Prescribed Burn at Cold Harbor Battlefield

The park conducted a 28 acre prescribed burn at the Cold Harbor unit on March 1. The objectives of the burn were to reduce the threat of wildfire by reducing the build-up of vegetation, to open up the historic scene, and to promote the growth of native tall grasses so that park visitors can get a feeling for the battlefield as it appeared during the Civil War. Fire also saves money on maintenance and enhances the Cold Harbor ecosystem, creating important habitat for birds.

Conditions such as wind direction, wind speed, smoke dispersion and fuel moisture were monitored frequently throughout the day to ensure that conditions continued to be safe. The fire successfully opened up the majority of the area, leaving occasional forest outcrops to

serve as refuge for wildlife.

The park had 16 firefighters on hand to ensure that the fire was conducted safely. Assistance was received from Blackcreek Volunteer Fire Department, Beaverdam Volunteer Fire Department, Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation, as well as other Virginia National Parks, including Fredericksburg and Spotsylvania National Military Park, Petersburg National Battlefield, Colonial National Historical Park, and Shenandoah National Park. The area is currently black, but in just a few months, will be green with vegetation.



An NPS firefighter monitors the progress of the Cold Harbor burn on March 1, 2004.

## The Superintendent's Letter

Here we are in the cold of winter planning for the hot summer 140<sup>th</sup> anniversaries of Civil War battles near Richmond, specifically Cold Harbor, New Market Heights, and Ft. Harrison. Today, we have our central heat and air conditioning systems, our cell phones, radios, our computers, and our cars. Then, they had wood, matches, pen and paper, their horses, their cannon, guns, and ammunition, and their faith. We are linked by our patriotism, our reverence for the land, our love of friends and family, and our hope for the future built on the foundations laid by this country's forbearers.

When you revisit Richmond National Battlefield Park and Maggie L. Walker National Historic Site, you'll see changes that mother nature wrought in her September Hurricane that we called Isabel, and you'll see changes that we are making in the presentation of the history that is associated with the sites. For instance, we will welcome you to walk inside Mrs. Walker's library for the first time on a guided tour of her house. The library may be the most important room in the house, and it certainly is my favorite; it is now available for closer inspection and greater inspiration. We will welcome a new sculpture exhibit at the Tredegar Iron Works visitor center, which will illustrate a descendant's view of the War Between the States, the struggle between brothers.

We have received reduced funding allocation for our fiscal year that started October 1, 2003, and we hope that we can stretch the funds to keep our visitor centers open this summer, to support the resource inventory and monitoring that is giving us important new information, and to maintain the park resources as you are accustomed to seeing them. We encourage you to volunteer to assist us. Please call Ed Sanders, Richmond National Battlefield Park's Volunteer Coordinator at 226-1981 x 28 or Celia Suggs, Maggie L. Walker National Historic Site's Volunteer Coordinator at 771-2017 to express your interest. Your parks need you.

*Cynthia MacLeod*

## Maggie L. Walker NHS Exhibit Planning Under Way

In 1985 the Maggie L. Walker NHS opened to the public, and since then visitors have viewed a series of temporary exhibits. Just recently the park received funding through the Fee Demonstration program for the development, fabrication and installation of new interpretive exhibits.

In January a planning session with the contractor and park staff focused on timelines, interpretive themes, and a strategy to insure that the completed exhibits will be ready for installation during February 2005, only 13 months from the start date. This is remarkable as some interpretive exhibit projects can take years for completion.

The interpretive themes that will guide the development of the new exhibits depart

somewhat from the traditional Walker story. By expanding the context visitors will be able to understand the incredible hardships that confronted African Americans in the years following the Civil War, and the resolve necessary for Maggie Walker to achieve success under the harsh "Jim Crow" laws of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. The exhibits will explore the spirit of activism that made Maggie Walker a national leader in the pursuit of civil rights for women. These stories combined with her establishment of the Penny Savings Bank, her leadership of the St. Luke organization, and her legacy of inspiration will help future audiences understand a more complete Maggie Walker.

## Employee Profile: Ed Sanders

Ed Sanders is a Park Ranger in the Interpretive Division of Richmond National Battlefield Park and he considers himself fortunate to serve as the park's Volunteer Coordinator. "This allows me to work with a great group of motivated volunteers," he says, including the many Living History groups that provide programs such as artillery and infantry firing demonstrations. "I always enjoy working with the groups because these programs helped spark my love of history many years ago." Ed also serves as a Historic Weapons Instructor for the National Park Service, specializing in 19<sup>th</sup> Century artillery.

Ed started working at Richmond National Battlefield Park in the early 1980's as a volunteer for the Living History program. "I was still in high school and too young to work for the park so I volunteered. My first few summers I was the drummer for the 98<sup>th</sup> New York Volunteer Infantry at Fort Harrison. I started out as a pretty pitiful drummer but eventually could scrape by. During college I continued on as a seasonal and was hired as a permanent employee upon graduation." When



**Ed Sanders, Park Ranger--Volunteer Coordinator, Richmond National Battlefield Park**

asked why he joined the National Park Service Ed had this to say: "I have always had a great interest in the Civil War and wanted a career where I could pursue this interest. My experiences visiting the National Battlefields as a child and then volunteering at Richmond and getting to work with the exceptional staff led to my interest in the National Park Service."

Ed was born overseas while his father served at the United States Consulate and was raised in Virginia. He and his wife enjoying traveling and visiting historical sites. They have one daughter.

# Park Mourns the Passing of Jim Gates



**Jim Gates and Casey, another park friend who has passed on, pose for the camera at the Cold Harbor visitor center.**

It is with the deepest regret that Richmond National Battlefield Park announces the passing of one of its outstanding volunteers, James Gates. Jim had volunteered at the Cold Harbor battlefield almost every single day since the Visitor Center opened in 1995. His passion for studying the Civil War and sharing his knowledge with the public was evident to anyone that spent time with him. Each day he

volunteered a few hours at the Visitor Center, enthusiastically greeting visitors and answering questions on the battle of Cold Harbor. Often he would lead the public on walking tours of the battlefield.

Jim's assistance did not end with helping the public. When the park was looking for specific Civil War artifacts for display, Jim offered the items from his own collection. In the spring of 2000 Jim received the Northeast Region's Interpretive Volunteer

Award for his outstanding work at Cold Harbor. With all the support he gave and the visitors he touched, Jim's enthusiasm for the park was still as strong the last day he volunteered as the first. As one visitor wrote the park after Jim's tour, "The guide was as much a treasure as the site itself." He will be greatly missed.

## Upcoming Events

Richmond National Battlefield Park and Maggie L. Walker National Historic Site are preparing for several exciting special events this year. Please join us.

**March 27** Womens' History Month Program, Maggie L. Walker National Historic Site

**May 2-9** Historic Preservation Week Walking Tours, Maggie L. Walker National Historic Site

**May 15-16** Drewry's Bluff Anniversary Program, Richmond National Battlefield Park

**May 31** Memorial Day Program at Fort Harrison National Cemetery, sponsored by Richmond National Battlefield Park

**June 26-27** Gaines' Mill Anniversary Program, Richmond National Battlefield Park

**July 10-11** Malvern Hill Anniversary Program, Richmond National Battlefield Park



**National Park Service**  
U.S. Department of the Interior

Richmond National Battlefield Park was established in 1936 to commemorate the battlefields around Richmond, Virginia, Capital of the Confederacy, 1861-1865.

Maggie L. Walker National Historic Site was established in 1978 to preserve and protect the home of the first woman to charter and act as president of a bank.

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## Retired Biology Professor Conducts Park Monitoring Program

Richmond National Battlefield Park's many streams create important habitat for a diverse community of plants, fish, birds, reptiles, amphibians and mammals. However, because these habitats are so intricately tied to the lands surrounding them, they are often threatened by land uses outside of the park. In order for the park to protect these habitats and the communities they harbor, it must regularly monitor their health. This was begun in the fall with the help of a new program partnering the National Park Service and the Environmental Alliance for Senior Involvement. Using this partnership, the park was paired with Dr. Bernard Solon, a retired biology professor from Pennsylvania. Dr. Solon spent one month this fall inventorying the insects living out the early stages of their lives in park streams. Because certain insects are more sensitive than others, their presence, along with the diversity of species present in the community, can



**Special thanks to Dr. Bernard Solon for his help in protecting the park's water habitats.**

quickly and effectively characterize the health of a stream habitat. In this way, Dr. Solon was able to report to the park the state of its water environments. Dr. Solon will return in the spring to teach park personnel how to capture and identify these insects, so that the park can carry out his work twice per year in the future, detecting and reversing any degradation of its stream environments so that it can protect the natural communities living within them.



National Park Service  
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# The Quarterly

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## “War Unrelenting”: Special Events Commemorate 1864 Campaign

Richmond National Battlefield Park, Fredericksburg and Spotsylvania National Military Park and Petersburg National Battlefield are joining with Orange, Stafford, Spotsylvania, Hanover, Henrico and Chesterfield counties, and the cities of Fredericksburg, Richmond, Petersburg and Hopewell to present a series of special events commemorating the 140th anniversary of the Overland Campaign. The following are just a few of the many exciting programs you can look forward to at Richmond National Battlefield Park this year. For a complete listing of events that follow the campaign from the battle of the Wilderness to the siege of Petersburg please visit [www.leevsgrantr1864.com](http://www.leevsgrantr1864.com)

**140th Anniversary Events for Richmond National Battlefield Park:**

**April 24** Richmond Civil War Day at Tredegar Iron Works

**June 12-13** Life in the Cold Harbor Trenches

**May 23** North Anna River Commemorative Program

**July 15-18** “War at Our Doors: Virginia’s Civilians Amidst War”

**May 30** Walking Tour of Totopotomoy Creek Battlefield

**August 7** Fort Harrison Interpretive Bike Tour

**June 3** Walking Tour of Union Breakthrough at Cold Harbor

**September 25-26** Fort Harrison Anniversary Program

**June 5-6** Cold Harbor Anniversary Program

**September 26** Battle of New Market Heights Commemorative Event