



# News from White Haven

Ulysses S. Grant National Historic Site educates the American people regarding the lives and legacies of Civil War General and 18th President Ulysses S. Grant, his wife, Julia Dent Grant, the enslaved African Americans and other residents of White Haven.

News from White Haven is a quarterly publication of Ulysses S. Grant NHS. It is also available online by visiting [www.nps.gov/ulsg/](http://www.nps.gov/ulsg/).

## Editorial Staff

Robert Pollock  
Nick Sacco

## Chief of Interpretation

Julie Northrip

## Superintendent

Tim Good

## Contributors

David Newmann

Comments? Write to:  
Chief of Interpretation  
Ulysses S. Grant National Historic Site  
7400 Grant Road  
St. Louis, MO 63123

Telephone  
314-842-1867

E-mail  
[ulsg\\_interpretation@nps.gov](mailto:ulsg_interpretation@nps.gov)

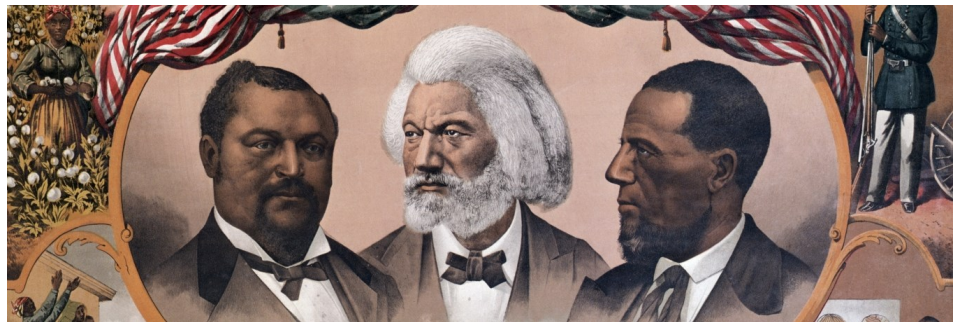


For up to the minute news,  
follow us on facebook,  
twitter and Instagram.



New address? Going green?  
Update us on your new address or  
subscribe to News from White Haven  
online by e-mailing  
[ulsg\\_interpretation@nps.gov](mailto:ulsg_interpretation@nps.gov)

## National Park Service Continues Focus On Civil War To Civil Rights



*During Reconstruction, for the first time, African Americans, including those who had formerly been enslaved, were allowed to participate in the political process.*

Last year, the nation and the National Park Service completed the 150th anniversary of the American Civil War. The Sesquicentennial Commemoration included events both in and outside of park boundaries, with an emphasis on developing a shared history that acknowledged slavery as the war's cause and emancipation as its objective. This emphasis stood in sharp contrast to the goals of commemoration during the 100th anniversary of the Civil War, in which slavery, African Americans, and emancipation were often ignored.

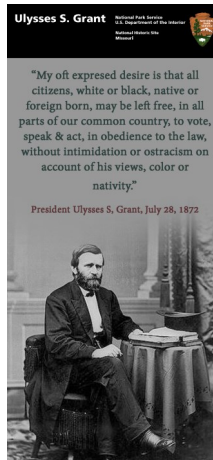
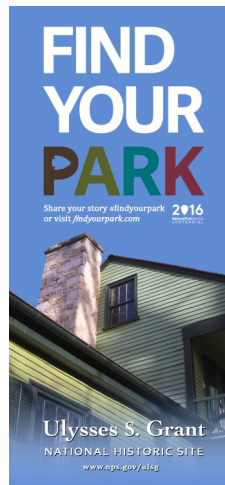
The National Park Service is now focusing on the 150th anniversary of the pivotal Reconstruction period (1865-1877). The Civil War has been commemorated since the guns fell silent. Civil War events are well represented within the National Park System, and have received immense scholarly attention. Reconstruction, however, is not represented at all within the National Park System, its events have never been commemorated, and it has received far less attention from scholars.

The National Park Service intends to change that. In regards to commemorations, the agency is partnering with a variety of individuals and organizations in Memphis, Tennessee to commemorate one of the first, most significant Reconstruction events: The Memphis Massacre of 1866. Over three days from May 1st to 3rd, 1866, white mobs, attempting to maintain white supremacy, murdered over forty African Americans, torched every African American church, and burned all of the African American schools to the ground. The event has never been commemorated until now.

To increase the available literature on Reconstruction, the National Park Service recently published a book on Reconstruction which includes essays from a variety of scholarly experts. Additionally, the National Park Service is completing a Reconstruction theme study to recognize possible National Historic Landmark sites. And finally, the agency is also working on a report to identify sites for possible inclusion in the National Park System.

## Record Visitation At The Park In First Quarter Of 2016

Each unit of the National Park Service is tasked with tracking how many people visit their site both monthly and annually. So far the year 2016 has been a record-breaking year for visitation to the Ulysses S. Grant National Historic Site. Monthly visitation records have been broken for the months of January, February, and March, and visitation for the year has been up by forty percent compared to 2015. This visitation boost is attributable to a number of factors. Every seat was filled for the park's winter/spring series of living history programs that featured



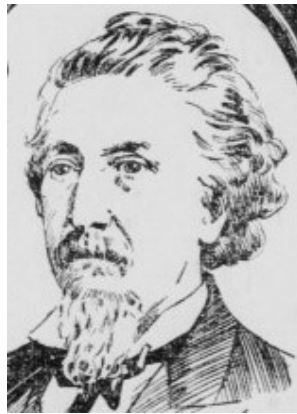
performers portraying historical figures such as Eleanor Roosevelt, Elizabeth Keckley, James Madison, and Mark Twain; the NPS's "Find Your Park" campaign has brought an increased number of school groups to the park for field trips; and unseasonably warm weather this winter attracted new visitors. The park's annual visitation record is 46,398, which was set in 2007. Perhaps a new record will be set this year! In addition to every-day tours of White Haven, several special events are upcoming. Come on out, find your park, and be counted!

## Henrietta Jones And The Promise Of Freedom

In 1879, following a trip around the world, former President and First Lady, Ulysses S. and Julia Dent Grant returned to the United States at San Francisco. Receptions were held to toast their homecoming. Julia wrote in her Memoirs of an encounter she had at one reception:

*Towards the latter part of a reception tendered to the General, a colored woman entered and was announced as Mrs. Jones. She came up and, holding out her hand, said: 'Miss Julie, I do not believe you know me. I am Henrietta, or Henny, as you used to call me at home.' I took both of her hands now. She was one of our old slaves my father had sent with my brother G. W. Dent long years ago to nurse his (my father's) grandchildren. I was very glad to see Henny and told her to come to my room the next day, but I never saw her afterwards.*

This small passage, written by Julia twenty or so years after this meeting between the former mistress of White Haven and a former enslaved woman of White Haven, raises a number of interesting questions. California had entered the Union in 1850 as a free state. Julia's brother, Lewis Dent had actually been a delegate at the convention in 1849 that drafted California's first Constitution, in which slavery was prohibited in the state. In 1850 Lewis and the



George W. Dent

eldest Dent brother, John, purchased a ferry on the Stanislaus River and operated it until 1856, along with a hotel and restaurant. By the time George left Missouri in 1852 to join his brothers in California, he and Julia's father, Colonel Dent, would have been aware that slavery was prohibited in California. Nevertheless, Colonel Dent, according to Julia, sent their enslaved woman Henrietta to California with George. Henrietta would have been free the moment she reached California's border. Or, would she?

Slavery didn't end as easily as the anti-slavery folks in California had hoped. Anti-slavery advocates believed that having the state Constitution expressly prohibit slavery in the state would mean

exactly that – no slavery. Slaveholders, however, refused to give up their chattel so easily. After the Constitution was ratified and the state was admitted to the Union, they continued to hold their slaves in bondage using various tactics to skirt the Constitution. One of those tactics was to sign slaves to labor contracts. In California these contracts were sometimes upheld in the courts and other times deemed illegal. Much depended on the ideological sympathies of the particular judge hearing the case.

After leaving Missouri in 1852, George Dent lived most of his life in California. He was elected to the California State Legislature, serving in 1859 and 1860 as a Democrat. Thereafter, he lived much of the time in the San Francisco Bay area where he held federal positions. When he died in 1899, newspapers announced his passing. By contrast, almost nothing is known about the life and death of Henrietta Jones. How long she stayed with George and his children is unknown. Henrietta became a free woman, but we don't know exactly when. We don't know if she ever had children of her own. Were it not for Julia Grant's passing mention of her encounter with Henrietta in San Francisco in 1879, Henrietta Jones would be entirely lost to history.

## Spotlight on the Park: Invasive Species Removal

After months of research and planning by the maintenance team, the site began a three-year project to remove all invasive plant species from the park grounds on February 18th. The locally-owned Native Landscape Solutions Inc. was hired to clear out the invasive species, which took roughly one week to completely remove. The second phase of the project started in late March when NLS returned to administer an herbicidal treatment that will kill off all dormant root systems.



Most of the invasive species was Japanese Honeysuckle, which is considered a Class B noxious weed by the U.S. Department of Agriculture and is prohibited from being planted in some states. The Honeysuckle at White Haven most likely dates to the 1960s, when it was used for visual coverage from the surrounding neighborhood and erosion control. Once all the invasive species are removed from the park, native plants and hardwood trees will be planted. At the conclusion of this project the park grounds will more closely resemble their nineteenth-century appearance when the Grants and Dents lived at White Haven.

## Robert Smalls Exhibit Coming In June

Robert Smalls was born into slavery in South Carolina. At the age of 12, Robert was “rented out” in Charleston, where he worked on a ship called *The Planter*. He learned the skills needed to be an excellent pilot. At 19, Robert was allowed to marry and had two children. Robert wanted freedom for himself and his family. By 1862 the Civil War had broken out, and the Confederates had commandeered *The Planter* into service. The Union Navy had blockaded Charleston Harbor. One night all of the white crew had gone ashore, and Smalls and three other enslaved men gathered their families on *The Planter* for a daring voyage. Smalls eased the ship into the current and headed out of Charleston harbor. He was familiar with the waters and rebel routines and steamed the *Planter* past five Confederate gun batteries, giving the correct signals for safe passage at each. By dawn on May 13, 1862, 23-year-old Robert Smalls surrendered the *CSS Planter* to the Union forces, and freedom was theirs!



Smalls was elected to the South Carolina Constitutional Convention in 1868. From 1869 to 1889, he served in both houses of the South Carolina Legislature and was elected to five terms in the United States Congress.

We are excited to announce that, beginning June 13, U. S. Grant NHS will be hosting "The Life and Times of Congressman Robert Smalls," a travelling exhibition featuring numerous artifacts and historic documents related to Robert Smalls' extraordinary life. The exhibit will be at the park through October.

## Reconstruction Mix-n-Match

- |  |                       |
|--|-----------------------|
| 1. Succeeded to the Presidency after Abraham Lincoln's assassination.      | A.) 13th Amendment    |
| 2. First African American to be elected to the U.S. Senate.                | B.) Carpetbaggers     |
| 3. Guarantees birthright citizenship and the equal protection of the laws. | C.) Freedmen's Bureau |
| 4. Northerners who settled in the South during Reconstruction.             | D.) 15th Amendment    |
| 5. Guarantees all men the right to vote, regardless of color.              | E.) Andrew Johnson    |
| 6. Provided aid to formerly enslaved African Americans.                    | F.) Scalawags         |
| 7. White Southerners who supported the Republican Party.                   | G.) 14th Amendment    |
| 8. Abolished slavery in the United States.                                 | H.) Hiram Revels      |
| 9. Arrested for voting for U.S. Grant in 1872 Presidential election.       | I.) Susan B. Anthony  |

(Key: 1-E, 2-H, 3-G, 4-B, 5-D, 6-C, 7-F, 8-A, 9-I)



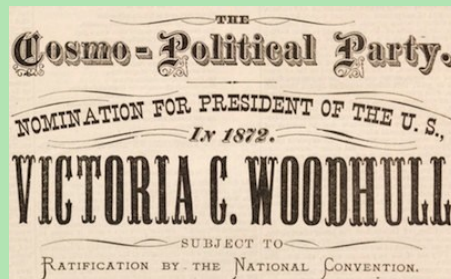
**Ulysses S. Grant NHS**  
**7400 Grant Road**  
**St. Louis, MO 63123**  
**(314) 842-1867**

## **Upcoming Events -** Events may require reservations! Check with park staff for more information.

- May 7—37th Annual St. Louis Storytelling Festival
- June 3—Special Screening of “Rosenwald,” with filmmaker Aviva Kempner as commentator
- June 18—Picnic in the Park
- July 23—U. S. Grant Death Day Commemoration
- August 1—American Solar Challenge
- August 25—NPS Centennial Concert
- September 9-11—Grant or Greeley—Which? The Election of 1872: A Living History Event

## **Did you know?**

The first woman to be nominated for President was Victoria C. Woodhull – in 1872 – the year U. S. Grant was running for re-election. Woodhull’s candidacy upset the era’s arbiters of morality because she advocated what was termed “free love.” In November 1871, Woodhull gave a speech to a crowd in New York City which she titled, *‘The Principles of Social Freedom,’ Involving the Question of Free Love, Marriage, Divorce, and Prostitution.* Someone shouted from the audience that night, “Are you a free lover?” Woodhull



replied, “Yes, I am a free lover. I have an inalienable, constitutional and natural right to love whom I may, to love as long or short a period as I can; to change that love everyday if I please, and with that right neither you nor any law you can frame

have any right to interfere!” Woodhull’s social views particularly rankled Harriet Beecher Stowe, sister of the leading evangelist of the time, Henry Ward Beecher. Harriet wrote searing articles attacking Woodhull.

**We are planning a major living history event for September 9-11 which will bring to life the people and events of the Election of 1872. More details will be forthcoming, so stay tuned!**