



# The Fort Log

## Fort Necessity/National Road Interpretive Playground Dedicated

Kids just need to be kids! Younger visitors can now unwind and explore the interpretive playground next to the Fort Necessity/National Road Interpretive and Education Center. The multiple climbing structures on the playground represent

**It's all reinforcing to the children – national park, visitor center, play, learn, then the real thing.**

the circular fort, the storehouse inside the fort, and a Conestoga wagon. Kid-friendly exhibits, including “take your photo with historic characters,” introduce the people from the history of Fort Necessity and the National Road.

The new playground was dedicated on Wednesday, May 16th, 2007. The playground is surrounded by a patio area where families can relax after spending time in the Interpretive Center, visiting Fort Necessity, participating in a ranger-led tour, or riding in the car. It is a perfect area to have lunch while kids expend their energy. The new Interpretive and Education Center has become a family-friendly destination for the region's cultural and recreational tourists.

The new interpretive playground was designed in consultation with the early childhood development staff of the Children's Museum in Pittsburgh. The thematic playground is the first of its kind



Children learn about people who travelled the National Road and stayed at the Mount Washington Tavern while they play.

in any National Park. Designed for kids of all ages, the playground will encourage families to learn about the park story through play.

The playground exhibits were made possible through a generous donation from The Grable Foundation.



Children enjoy the active learning experience at the new playground

### 2008 Events

May 17–18  
National Road Festival

May 28  
Jumonville Memorial Program

May 31 – June 1  
British and French Encampment

July 3  
Battle Anniversary Commemoration Programs

July 5-6  
Wagoner on the Braddock Campaign

July 12-13  
American Indian Traditional Skills Demonstration Weekend

August 9-10  
American Indian Encampment

October 17-18  
Geo. Washington Bill of Sale Exhibit Opening

## From the Superintendent

It is my sincere pleasure to welcome you to the park. We have come a long way from our old visitor center to the one you can experience today with state-of-the-art interpretive exhibits, curriculum-based educational programs, and the first-ever interpretive playground in the National Park Service. If you haven't experienced these wonderful facilities yet, I invite you to come, bring your friends and family, and experience the many activities we have at the park. I would also encourage you to think about exploring our park volunteer program, and experience first hand how rewarding this can be.

Information on becoming a park volunteer is available by contacting Volunteer Coordinator Mary Jane McFadden 724-329-5473, or by e-mailing [mary\\_jane\\_mcfadden@nps.gov](mailto:mary_jane_mcfadden@nps.gov)

As proud as we are to showcase this nationally significant site to the public on a daily basis, it is also important to understand that from time to time certain repairs and improvements become necessary in order for us to fulfill our mission. With this in mind, visitors to Fort Necessity in 2008 may experience a number of works in progress.

Most visibly, the park entrance road is undergoing realignment as part of the overall project which resulted in the opening of the new Visitor and Education Center in 2005. The new road will give visitors more direct access to the Visitor and Education Center, and eventually allow park staff to remove other sections of the old road which will be no longer needed. These areas will be restored to natural condition.

The Mount Washington Tavern will be receiving a new heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) system which will improve climate control in the historic structure.

At a future date, the park will also be tapping into the new municipal water line along Highway 40, ensuring reliable water supplies to park structures.

Please forgive any minor and temporary inconveniences you may experience during your visit as we work to achieve long term improvements to the park. Your understanding is appreciated, and your satisfaction with services is our goal. Please accept my personal invitation to come and explore Fort Necessity National Battlefield.

Sincerely,  
Joanne Hanley  
General Superintendent,  
Western Pennsylvania Parks

# New School Programs Offered

Spring 2007 marked the introduction of a guided field trip program for kindergarten and 1st grade students. The program, *How Children Learned in the Past*, featured three stations. In the historic Mount Washington Tavern the children dressed in old-fashioned dresses and vests before experiencing how children in the 1830s would have learned in a one-room school house. At the reconstructed fort the students used wooden muskets to learn the musket firing drill and marching. At the visitor center the students were taught the importance of storytelling and wampum to American Indian children in the 1750s. A visit to the interpretive playground was incorporated into the field trip.

Local 5<sup>th</sup> grade students participated in a newly offered experiential tour, while learning about the National Road. The students cooked waffles on an open fire and churned cream into butter as part of their program.

Older students got to learn colonial surveying techniques and the difficulties of keeping an army supplied while on



Students roll and bake biscuits during the Travellers and Workers along the National Road educational program. Hands-on experiences are included in the park's educational programs for all ages.



Volunteer in Park Bob Nypar demonstrates historic surveying equipment prior to the students taking measurements of the fort.

campaign.

During November and December, more than 750 preschool children, parents and teachers participated in educational programs at the park developed in cooperation with Head Start/Early Head Start of Fayette County and funded by a grant from PNC Banks "Grow Up Great" initiative. Having seen the park's success with other educational programming, Head Start administrators asked the National Park Service to provide a program to meet the needs of the preschool children.

Through fun hands-on activities, children discovered how American Indian children in the 1750's learned through storytelling and song and experienced how children in the 1830's would have learned in a one-room school house. One Head Start teacher commented: "This has been a great experience for our kids and parents, it's fun as well as educational, and the park rangers have done a wonderful job."

Transportation was provided to parents who accompanied their children, bringing to the park a segment of our population that might not otherwise have the opportunity. Like the new interpretive playground, this field trip serves previously underserved audiences



# Volunteers Build New Cabin for Fort Necessity

In late May and early June of 1754, Virginians under the command of George Washington hurriedly constructed a cabin and stockade. Their concern was an imminent attack by French and Indians.

Two hundred and fifty-three years later the concern is focused on interpreting

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**Interested in becoming a Volunteer? Call Volunteer Coordinator Mary Jane McFadden at 724-329-5473**

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the site for visitors. Visual elements of a re-constructed fort aid in this goal. But unlike Washington's fort, the present re-constructed fort must last longer than the one month his did. Even the "new" fort needs replacement every so often.

In 2006 work began to construct a new

storage cabin. Re-enactors and park staff helped with the demolition of the old cabin to prepare the site. A contractor, Village Restorations, hewed and notched oak logs over the winter, and the cabin began to take shape in an Altoona warehouse.

In the summer of 2007, volunteers from Duke Energy were recruited to assist in the re-assembly of the cabin. On August 9, 2007 the four walls once again went up within the Great Meadows.

Final work is needed on the roof to finish the project. Upon completion the

park will have an authentic reproduction structure built to withstand time and the inspection of visitors.



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

The battle at Fort Necessity in the summer of 1754 was the opening action of the French and Indian War. This war was a clash of British, French and American Indian cultures. It ended with the removal of French power from North America.

By early in the 19th century, the wilderness had given way to settlement. The National Road passed by the site of Fort Necessity and bustled with traffic. Today the stagecoach stop known as the Mount Washington Tavern is a museum dealing with life along the Road.

**Fort Necessity National Battlefield**

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The National Park Service cares for the special places saved by the American people so that all may experience our heritage.

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## Making Your Parks Safe and Accessible for All

For several weeks of summer, as temperatures rose into the high nineties, Fort Necessity staff installed detectable warning pavers at all public entrances in the park. The pavers have a textured surface that indicated to pedestrians, especially those with impaired vision, that they are about to step into a traffic area.

Each detectable paver is a two foot square of concrete tile weighing 80 to 100 pounds. Installing these twenty-seven concrete pavers at the Visitor Center and Mount Washington Tavern is one way the National Park Service is working to provide a safer environment for all visitors.



Fort Necessity maintenance staff cut, chiseled and removed approximately 216 square feet of concrete from existing sidewalk. The pavers were then cut, shaped and fitted into the contour of the sidewalks. The cut pavers were placed on top of mortar in the sidewalk cavity, leveled and secured into place.

# Fort Necessity Daily Summer Programs



	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednes.	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>9:00</b>	The Visitor Center exhibits are open 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. every day The introductory movie <i>Road of Necessity</i> begins every half hour from 9:00 a.m through 4:30 p.m.						
<b>10:30</b>	MWT 72 for breakfast	MWT 72 for breakfast	MWT Guided Tour	MWT Guided Tour	MWT Guided Tour	MWT 72 for breakfast	MWT 72 for breakfast
<b>11:30</b>	Fort Area Soldier Life Program	Fort Area Soldier Life Program	Fort Area Soldier Life Program	Fort Area Soldier Life Program	Fort Area Soldier Life Program	Fort Area Soldier Life Program	Fort Area Soldier Life Program
<b>12:30</b>	Vis. Center Daily Special	Vis. Center Daily Special	Vis. Center Daily Special	Vis. Center Daily Special	Vis. Center Daily Special	Vis. Center Daily Special	Vis. Center Daily Special
<b>1:30</b>	Fort Area Soldier Life Program	Fort Area Soldier Life Program	Fort Area Soldier Life Program	Fort Area Soldier Life Program	Fort Area Soldier Life Program	Fort Area Soldier Life Program	Fort Area Soldier Life Program
<b>2:30</b>	MWT Made in PA	MWT Made in PA	MWT Guided Tour	MWT Guided Tour	MWT Guided Tour	MWT Made in PA	MWT Made in PA
<b>3:30</b>	Fort Area Soldier Life Program	Fort Area Soldier Life Program	Fort Area Soldier Life Program	Fort Area Soldier Life Program	Fort Area Soldier Life Program	Fort Area Soldier Life Program	Fort Area Soldier Life Program
<b>4:00</b>			Braddock Road	Braddock Road	Braddock Road	Braddock Road	Braddock Road
<b>All programs depend on weather conditions and availability of staff.</b>							

## EXPERIENCE YOUR AMERICA™

The Fort Log is published by the National Park Service for visitors to Fort Necessity National Battlefield.

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## Thanks go out to Park Volunteers

Between October 2006 and September 2007, Fort Necessity hosted a total of 247 volunteers that worked in Interpretation, Cultural and Resource Management, Administration and Maintenance. These individuals and service groups worked almost 9,500 hours. The service groups were from the US Forest Service, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, area schools and the New Meadow Run and Spring Valley Communities. Many of our volunteers are from the local area while others drive from as far away as Pittsburgh. College interns from California, Slippery Rock, and Lock Haven Universities of Pennsylvania, St. Vincent's College, Penn State, West Virginia University and Washington & Jefferson College also volunteered at the park.

One highlight of this past year involved volunteers using the new Jr. Ranger activity booklets to assist with "Junior Ranger Day." Local boy and girl scouts signed up to take part to learn more about Fort Necessity and the National Road time periods. Volunteers helped to award 75 patches, badges, certificates and buttons to the scouts.

Volunteers this year also helped with park special events; reconstruction of the Fort cabin; removal of invasive plant species; surveying flora and fauna; inventory of park artifacts; leading interpretive tours; assisting in curriculum based education programs; staffing the visitor center desk; conducting living history programs, demonstrating musket and artillery firing, and assisting with general grounds cleaning.



Students from New Meadow Run School work on removal of exotic plants in the Great Meadow.