

Press Materials

The David Wills House

Contact: Jennifer Roth, David Wills House Museum Manager (866-486-5735)

Call for high resolution graphics

Gettysburg National Military Park and Main Street Gettysburg Press Release

For Release: January 7, 2009

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Explore Lincoln and the Aftermath of Battle at the David Wills House, Opening February 12

“After the battle, Gettysburg became a vast hospital and morgue: dead and wounded soldiers outnumbered civilians eleven to one,” - so begins the Battle’s Aftermath exhibit at the David Wills House, opening February 12 in downtown Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, as part of Gettysburg National Military Park.

For the first time ever, the National Park Service has created a museum to tell the story of the aftermath of battle, and Lincoln’s visit to the give the Gettysburg Address. “The home of David Wills, a prominent citizen of the town, become ground zero in Gettysburg’s recovery effort, with Wills himself fulfilling the roles of the CDC, the Red Cross, and FEMA combined,” says Dr. John A. Latschar, Superintendent of Gettysburg National Military Park.

In honor of Abraham Lincoln’s 200th birthday on February 12, the David Wills House will celebrate an official ribbon cutting, offering visitors a new look at the little-known story of the aftermath at Gettysburg and Lincoln’s visit to give the Gettysburg Address. Grand Opening events will take place throughout 2009 – Lincoln’s bicentennial year.

The museum includes seven galleries filled with displays, original artifacts, and featuring two films: “Battle Ground to Hallowed Ground” which explores Cemetery Hill’s transition from a Union army defensive position to the site of the National cemetery; and “A Brief but Immortal Speech” which investigates the meaning of the Gettysburg Address from November 19, 1863, to today.

Two rooms are restored to their 1863 appearance: Wills’ office as he received letters from families looking for loved ones after the battle and began planning for the cemetery and its dedication; and the bedroom where Lincoln stayed and prepared to deliver the Gettysburg Address.

Main Street Gettysburg will operate the museum located at 8 Lincoln Square in downtown Gettysburg, in partnership with the National Park Service. The property is on the National Register of Historic Places and has just had a \$ 7.2 million overhaul to rehabilitate its historic features and develop the museum exhibits.

Winter operating hours will be Wednesdays through Sundays, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. In spring and fall the hours will be Tuesdays through Sundays, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. In summer the hours will be 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., seven days a week.

On February 12 admission will be free to all. Regular entrance fees will be \$6.50 for Adults; \$5.50 for Seniors; \$4.00 for Youth (6-18); and Children 5 and under are free. For group tour reservations call toll-free: 866/486-5735.

Main Street Gettysburg is a nonprofit organization dedicated to historic preservation and economic revitalization of Gettysburg for the benefit of its citizens, businesses, and visitors. For information about the benefits of becoming a David Wills House Charter Guardian, contact Main Street Gettysburg at 866-486-5735 or at www.davidwillshouse.org.

Gettysburg National Military Park is a unit of the National Park Service that preserves and protects the resources associated with the Battle of Gettysburg and the Soldiers' National Cemetery, and provides an understanding of the events that occurred there within the context of American History. Information is available at www.nps.gov/gett.

-END-

Photo attached of an October 15, 1863 public notice by David Wills seeking proposals for the removal of the dead on the Gettysburg Battlefield.

(See attached file: Proposal to bury the dead.jpg)

Editor's Note: Preview tours of the David Wills House will be offered to the news media on February 3, 4, and 5. To attend, contact Jennifer Roth, by phone at 717/337-3491 ext. 3, or by email at:

Willshouse@gettysburgpa.org

PROPOSALS

FOR THE REMOVAL OF THE DEAD ON THE GETTYSBURG BATTLE-FIELD.

SEALED proposals will be received at my Office in the Borough of Gettysburg, until the 22d inst., at 12 o'clock, noon, for the following two contracts, viz:

1st. For disinterring the bodies on the Gettysburg Battle Field and at the Hospitals in the vicinity, and removing them to the Soldiers' Cemetery on the south side of the Borough of Gettysburg.

2d. For digging the graves, and burying the dead in the Cemetery.

The specifications of work for each contract, to be strictly complied with by the Contractor, can be seen and examined at my office.

DAVID WILLS,

Agent for A. G. CURTIN, Governor of Pennsylvania.

Gettysburg, Oct. 15, 1863.

PRINTED AT THE "SENTINEL OFFICE," GETTYSBURG.

The David Wills House Nears Completion



The David Wills House Gettysburg National Military Park

Opening February 12, 2009, as part of Gettysburg National Military Park, the David Wills House in downtown Gettysburg tells the story of a town recovering from the devastation of battle, and a war-worn President who came to dedicate a national cemetery. David Wills' home was the center of the immense clean-up process after the Battle of Gettysburg. In a second-floor bedroom, President Abraham Lincoln put the finishing touches on the Gettysburg Address - the speech transformed Gettysburg from a place of sorrow to the symbol of our nation's new birth of freedom.

The museum includes seven galleries, including the restored office where David Wills coordinated post-battle recovery efforts and invited a President to deliver "a few appropriate remarks," and the famous Lincoln bedroom where the President finished revising the Gettysburg Address.

Main Street Gettysburg will operate the museum in cooperation with the National Park Service.

Reception area

Visitors will enter the home through the York Street entrance, which was the original entrance to the building used by the Wills Family. The Reception area includes an information desk where visitors may learn more about visiting the Wills House, and other activities and tours in the town of Gettysburg. An **admission fee** is charged for entry into the museum however the Reception area is open without a fee. A small bookstore will offer books and other educational items for sale.

Exhibit Galleries

Gallery 1 – The Wills Parlor: War Comes To Town

This first museum gallery includes artifacts, photographs, and stories about Gettysburg: a Crossroads Town, about the founding of Gettysburg and what it was like before the battle. The gallery also describes the aftermath of the Battle of Gettysburg and David Wills' involvement as the agent for town's recovery from an unprecedented tragedy.

A five minute film, "From Battle Ground to Hallowed Ground" tells the story of the transformation of Cemetery Hill from a Union army defensive position to the site of the national cemetery.

A map shows the ten roads leading into the growing town of Gettysburg. These are the roads that brought commerce, industry, and commodities into Gettysburg. In 1863 these roads filled with marching soldiers.

Exhibits on the aftermath of the battle highlight the hospitals, the morgue, and the supplies coming in. The Wills House itself was used to care for wounded. It was a depot for supplies for the U. S. Sanitary and Christian Commissions, and letters were delivered to Wills' office from people asking for help finding their sons lost in battle here.

A three dimensional diorama shows the 1863 neighborhood of the Wills House and how each building was used during the aftermath. Artifacts on exhibit will include items associated with the early life of David Wills, items documenting the battle in the town, and surgical instruments from the war.

Gallery 2 – Recreated Room: David Wills' Office, the Busiest Office in Gettysburg

This room recreates the office of attorney David Wills with writing desk, bookcase, and period furniture. When you enter David Will's office, you enter the center of Gettysburg's recovery efforts. Wills and others in the town were performing the work of today's FEMA, the American Red Cross, and the Center for Disease Control, combined.

An audio program in this gallery gives visitors a sense of being in the room as all of this was happening. Visitors will also be able to see original documents showing the efforts of David Wills in forming the national cemetery. When visitors leave they walk upstairs on the restored staircase.

Gallery 3 – Stairwell Foyer and Corridor: News of the Day

Pennsylvania's Governor Curtin designated David Wills as an agent for the state to help with the emergency. Wills invited the President to say a few appropriate remarks. He also invited Edward Everett, the main speaker. This gallery includes a montage of life before the war. Visitors can compare what the Gettysburg's two daily newspapers were writing about before the war began and these same newspapers' coverage of the battle, what some called "the Invasion of Pennsylvania."

The words of Gettysburg Address will be displayed here, including different versions of the speech and differing reactions to the speech. Visitors will also have a chance to see artifacts associated with the dedication ceremonies, including the saddle cover used by President Lincoln as he rode to then new national cemetery.

One panel shows that Everett and Lincoln said the same thing about the reason for the gathering on November 19, 1863. Everett made his point in a whopping 5566 words. Lincoln said his in only 38 words: "We have come to dedicate a portion of that field, as a final resting place for those who here gave their lives, that that nation might live. It is altogether fitting and proper that we should do this."

Gallery 4 - The Lincoln Parlor

While the Wills family and the Town of Gettysburg prepare for the President's visit, Lincoln makes his own preparations for the long train trip to Gettysburg. Lincoln's concerns about his

sick son, his experiences as a war president, and his responsibility for the great sacrifices at Gettysburg all weighed heavily on his mind while he prepared to ask citizens to rededicate themselves to the struggles of the war and the "...great task remaining."

On the eve of the Address, the Wills house was overflowing with dinner guests--38 of them. David and his wife, Catherine, spent the evening welcoming and hosting the dignitaries – a busy night for Catherine, who was expecting her fourth child. Overnight guests filled every room including her very own bedroom, which is where Lincoln stayed. By the time Governor Curtin arrived at almost midnight the house was full.

Exhibits here also prepare visitors to stand in the room where Lincoln stayed and finished revising his remarks the night before he delivered them and explore how and why the Gettysburg Address is remembered to this day.

Gallery 5 – Recreated Room: Lincoln’s Bedroom

An audio program at the entrance to the Lincoln bedroom is meant to take him from the status he occupies in minds of so many people today – half superhero and half saint – and humanize the man. As Lincoln is writing at a table visitors listen to his thoughts, learning about the things he was planning to say the next day as well as the other thoughts going through his mind, like the war up until this point, his sick son left at home, even the noisy crowd outside his window that wanted him to speak to them.

Displays identify the original bed and other furnishings used by Lincoln that will be on display in this room.

Gallery 6 – The Legacy of the Address

The gallery opens with a ten minute documentary film about the Gettysburg Address - "A brief but immortal speech." An interactive exhibit on myths of the Gettysburg Address lets visitors decide fact or fiction on statements like "Lincoln scribbled his address on the back of an envelope on the train to Gettysburg." Artifacts in this area will highlight the legacy of the Address.

Gallery 7 – The Wills House Through Time

The final exhibits in the museum focus on the preservation and restoration of the house and the Wills family legacy. Exhibits describe the preservation of the building, and its different uses through time including the building’s use as a drug store. In 2004 the house became property of the American people, ensuring that people from all over the world can visit to learn about the story of David Wills and his house as the center of the town’s recovery effort and Lincoln and his speech as a symbol of the nation’s recovery.

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ARTIFACTS



Lincoln Saddle Cover

Ward Dept.
No. 8th " (B.

Hon. A. Lincoln
Gettysburg Pa.

The Dr. has just
left. We hope dear
Paddie is slightly
better. Will send
you a telegram in
the morning.

Mrs Lincoln
20 chgo

Send via Ad
9:40 P.M. S.

Telegram to Lincoln at the Wills House

THE DAVID WILLS HOUSE AT GETTYSBURG NATIONAL MILITARY PARK

In honor of Abraham Lincoln's 200th birthday on February 12, 2009, the **David Wills House** in downtown Gettysburg will celebrate its **Grand Opening**, offering visitors a world-class museum experience that tells the story of Lincoln and the Gettysburg Address. Grand Opening events will take place from February 12 - 16, 2009.

David Wills' home was not just the center of Gettysburg -- it was the center of the immense clean-up process after the Battle of Gettysburg and where President Lincoln put the finishing touches on the Gettysburg Address. The speech transformed Gettysburg's community from a place of devastation to the symbol of our nation's new birth of freedom.

The museum features seven galleries, including two rooms that have been restored to their 1863 appearance: Wills' office, where he received letters from families looking for loved ones after the battle and began planning for a cemetery and its dedication; and the bedroom where Lincoln stayed and prepared to deliver the Gettysburg Address.

Main Street Gettysburg will operate the museum, as an official partner with Gettysburg National Military Park. The property is on the National Register of Historic Places.

- **Location:** 8 Lincoln Square
Gettysburg, Pa.
- **Hours:** Wednesdays through Sundays, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. In spring and fall the hours will be Tuesdays through Sundays, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. In summer the hours will be 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., seven days a week. The Wills House is a self-guided tour.
- **Phone:** 717-334-1124
- **When:** Grand Opening events from February 12 -16, 2009
- **Web site:** www.nps.gov/gett or www.mainstreetgettysburg.org
- **Admission:**

Adult:	\$6.50
Seniors:	\$5.50
Youth (6-18):	\$4.00
Children (5 and under):	FREE

THE NEW VISITOR EXPERIENCE AT GETTYSBURG NATIONAL MILITARY PARK

FACTS AT A GLANCE

Gettysburg National Military Park offers visitors the opportunity to immerse themselves in the history and culture of the Civil War and the 1863 Battle of Gettysburg. Each year, nearly two million visitors explore the site of this pivotal Civil War battle and the place where President Abraham Lincoln outlined the future of the nation in his Gettysburg Address. Visitors who experience Gettysburg National Military Park will leave with an understanding of the scope and magnitude of the sacrifices made by soldiers and civilians alike, which ultimately gave way to a new birth of freedom for our country. It is "Our Country's Common Ground."

Through a combination of new construction and rehabilitation projects, the Gettysburg Foundation and the National Park Service have embarked on a massive campaign that will return the historic integrity of the site and further educational opportunities available to visitors. Once complete, Gettysburg National Military Park will offer:

- The new **David Wills House at Gettysburg National Military Park**
- The new **Gettysburg Museum of the American Civil War** in the new **Museum and Visitor Center at Gettysburg National Military Park**
- The "**Battle of Gettysburg**" **Cyclorama Painting**, an experience that had been lost for more than a century
- The **Gettysburg Battlefield**, returned, as closely as possible, to its 1863 appearance
- **Soldiers' National Cemetery at Gettysburg National Military Park**

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The museum features six galleries, including two rooms that have been restored to their 1863 appearance: Wills' office, where he received letters from families looking for loved ones after the battle and began planning for a cemetery and its dedication; and the bedroom where Lincoln stayed and prepared to deliver the Gettysburg Address.

Main Street Gettysburg will operate the museum, as an official partner with Gettysburg National Military Park. The property is on the National Register of Historic Places.

- **Location:** 8 Lincoln Square
Gettysburg, Pa.
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- **Web site:** www.nps.gov/gett or www.davidwillshouse.org
- **Admission:**

Adult:	\$6.50
Seniors:	\$5.50
Youth (6-18):	\$4.00
Children (5 and under):	FREE

THE NEW GETTYSBURG MUSEUM OF THE AMERICAN CIVIL WAR

The new Gettysburg Museum of the American Civil War offers visitors a 21st-century museum experience that tells the story of the Battle of Gettysburg and its significance to our nation's history, within the context of the causes and consequences of the Civil War. The museum showcases an extensive collection of artifacts and archival materials and provides visitors with a distinctive perspective of the Civil War through the words of its participants and spectators, including Presidents Lincoln and Davis, Generals Meade and Lee, soldiers, correspondents and civilians. Through a variety of exhibits, interactive displays, films, and a host of research resources, the new Gettysburg Museum of the American Civil War provides a Civil War experience unlike any other.

- **Features:**
 - A **rotunda and museum lobby** that set the stage for the museum experience.
 - Of the **12 galleries** in the new Gettysburg Museum of the American Civil War, **11** are based on phrases from Lincoln's Gettysburg Address and organized to help visitors understand and appreciate the museum's major themes, including the Gettysburg Campaign, the Civil War, and its causes and consequences. With more than 300,000 objects and artifacts and 700,000 archival materials, the collection at Gettysburg National Military Park is one of the most extensive in the world.
 - **Interactive stations** and hands-on experiences will be located throughout the museum. Five of the galleries include short video presentations on the causes of the

war, the three days of Battle at Gettysburg, and the results of the war. The two Voices theaters feature readings from battle participants.

- The twelfth gallery, a **Special Exhibits Gallery** showcases temporary and traveling exhibits to broaden the number of topics covered in the museum. The current exhibit, "*I Take Up My Pen*," includes a collection of soldiers' letters from Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History, illustrated with artifacts from the park's collection.

The museum is located within the new **Museum and Visitor Center at Gettysburg National Military Park**. The \$103 million facility, which opened in April 2008, has been designed to help prepare visitors for their stay in Gettysburg, while at the same time offering such 21st-century amenities as:

- A **computer resource room** that gives visitors access to information about the people, the battle, the collection, and the monuments – all of which make Gettysburg an excellent educational experience.
- **The Ford Motor Company Fund Education Center** — multi-purpose educational facilities — the center provides dedicated space for teacher workshops, classroom use and distance learning programs.
- The **Refreshment Saloon** is a museum café with an outdoor dining terrace that offers visitors the opportunity to experience Civil War-era foods and recipes, and learn about the vital role played by the volunteers who supplemented government-issue rations.
- A **Museum Bookstore** that includes an extensive selection of Gettysburg, Civil War, and Lincoln-related titles for all ages, as well as a variety of Gettysburg-related gifts and memorabilia.

The new Museum and Visitor Center at Gettysburg National Military Park has been designed to meet **LEED performance certification** at the silver level, in support of Foundation and National Park Service environmental and sustainability goals. LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) certification is determined by the U.S. Green Building Council, which sets voluntary standards for high performance, sustainable buildings.

- **Size:** 139,000 square feet
- **Exhibit Space:** 24,000 square feet

GETTYSBURG CYCLORAMA PAINTING

The colossal circular oil painting, entitled "The Battle of Gettysburg," depicts a pivotal moment in America's history: the charge of Confederate infantry led by General George Pickett on July 3, 1863. This painting-in-the-round serves as a vivid monument to the soldiers on both sides who took part in the battle. Now complete — once again— with three-dimensional diorama and a sky that disappears into an overhead canopy, the painting is designed to give viewers the illusion that they are standing in the middle of Pickett's charge. Grown men were said to have

wept when they viewed this stirring example of state-of-the-art entertainment from the late 19th century.

One of only two Cyclorama paintings in the U.S. and about 20 worldwide, the new Gettysburg Cyclorama experience offers the only historically accurate venue in the country.

- **Artist:** “The Battle of Gettysburg” was painted in 1883-1884 by French master Paul Philippoteaux and a team of 20 artists.
- **Conservation Effort:** In 2003, after nearly a century of neglect and deterioration, the Gettysburg Cyclorama painting began a five-year conservation effort to return the work of art to its original glory. The project is the largest-ever of its kind in North America and is being directed by the Gettysburg Foundation, in partnership with Gettysburg National Military Park. The project includes not only conservation of the massive painting, but also recreation of 12 feet of sky, the three-dimensional diorama and the canopy, all of which have been lost for more than a century.
- **Cost:** The total cost of the project is \$15 million. This includes not only the conservation of the painting, but also the new hanging system, lighting, the canopy and diorama, a new sound and light program and exhibits in the gallery’s mezzanine level about the painting’s history and conservation.
- **Size:** Before conservation began in 2003, the painting measured 356 feet by 26 feet. Now, the painting has been returned to its original circumference of 377 feet at its widest points and 42 feet high. The painting, with its new backing and hanging system, weighs 12.5 tons.
- **The Program:** Visitors begin with a viewing of the 22-minute film, *A New Birth of Freedom*. Sponsored by the History Channel and narrated by Morgan Freeman and featuring the voices of Sam Waterston and Marcia Gay Harden, the film tells the story of the Battle of Gettysburg and the war that changed the nation. From the film, visitors will ascend three stories to the Cyclorama Gallery, where they will be immersed in the climactic moment of the three-day battle — Pickett’s charge. A sound and light program will bring the scene to life.
- **Conservation Firm:** Olin Conservation, Inc., Great Falls, Va.
- **Location:** 1195 Baltimore Pike
Gettysburg, Pa.
- **Phone:** 866-889-1243
- **Web site:** www.gettysburgfoundation.org or www.nps.gov/gett

Closed Thanksgiving, December 25 and January 1. Hours: 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. January-March and November-December; 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. April-May and September-October; and 8 a.m. to 7 p.m. June-August.

Tickets for the museum, Cyclorama painting and film, and for Battlefield tours, can be purchased online at www.gettysburgfoundation.org, which also offers more detail about the

new Gettysburg experience. Call 1-877-874-2478 to reserve a tour with a Licensed Battlefield Guide.

Gettysburg National Military Park is less than 90 minutes from Washington, D.C., and close to a variety of historical, recreational and cultural attractions, as well as theme parks, shopping and dining. We suggest you plan to stay for at least two to three days to explore all that the park and its surroundings have to offer.

From Pennsylvania Route 15, exit at Baltimore Street.

THE GETTYSBURG BATTLEFIELD

More than 165,000 soldiers fought with Union and Confederate armies on the battlefield at Gettysburg National Military Park. The battle lasted three days — July 1, 2 and 3, 1863, and raged through the town and the surrounding countryside. The largest battle ever fought in North America saw more than 51,000 soldiers killed, wounded or captured. Today, the Gettysburg Battlefield receives nearly two million visitors annually, who come from all over the world to learn about its historical significance, and to view its natural beauty.

- **Battlefield Rehabilitation:** The Battlefield is undergoing a multi-year, multi-million dollar rehabilitation to restore Gettysburg's historic integrity and enhance visitor understanding of and appreciation for what happened here in July 1863. Battlefield rehabilitation also will help create a sustainable environment by improving wetlands, water quality and wildlife habitat.
- **Battlefield Monuments and Memorials:** The Gettysburg Battlefield is the site of 1,328 monuments and memorials, the largest collection of outdoor sculpture in the world.
- **Size:** 6,000 acres

The **Gettysburg Foundation**, including the members of the **Friends of Gettysburg**, is providing financial support for the park's battlefield rehabilitation programs. The Friends of Gettysburg has, to date, preserved more than 500 acres of threatened battlefield land. It also helps fund the removal of modern-day intrusions, including burial of power lines, the rebuilding of fences and removal of the outdate buildings and parking areas along Cemetery Ridge.

SOLDIERS' NATIONAL CEMETERY AT GETTYSBURG NATIONAL MILITARY PARK

The Soldiers' National Cemetery at Gettysburg National Military Park was established as the final resting place for Union soldiers who died at Gettysburg, as well as for soldiers, veterans and dependents from the Civil War through Vietnam. It was officially closed in 1972. It was at the November 19, 1863, dedication of the cemetery, before a crowd of approximately 15,000 dignitaries, soldiers and civilians, that President Abraham Lincoln delivered the remarks the world knows today as the Gettysburg Address.

- **Size:** 17 Acres
- **Landscape Architect:** William Saunders