

THE U. S. NATIONAL PARK SYSTEM'S CULTURAL RESOURCES

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The cultural resources of the National Park System are as varied as are the parks. Most of the parks are in the System because of historical or archeological significance, and all the great natural and recreational parks have cultural resources, many of substantial significance.

Golden Gate National Recreation Area (GGNRA) is basically a giant historical park with a number of former military sites and an impressive number of ships, perhaps the world's largest collection of historic vessels. The valley of Yosemite National Park is a giant archeological district that is on the National Register of Historic Places. Gateway National Recreation Area—which has several large National Register properties in its boundaries—recently had its Fort Hancock recommended by the National Park Service Advisory Board to be designated as a National Historic Landmark. One could go on at considerable length citing the important cultural resources in the non-historical, non-archeological parks.

The cultural resources in the care of the National Park Service consist of masonry forts such as Ft. Jefferson in the Florida Keys, canals such as C & O Canal, presidents' homes, factories, fort complexes such as Fort Mason at GGNRA, bunkers, Endicott batteries, battlefields, homes of writers and painters and sculptors, Indian ruins, proving grounds, laboratories, bridges, lighthouses, lift locks, log cabins, statuary, giant monuments, mines, iron-works, shipwrecks, life saving stations, docks, ships, warehouses, historic trails, and on and on. In many instances we have tens or hundreds of each type. For example, there are over 30 masonry forts, around 50 lighthouses, around 1,800 major statues, and hundreds of Endicott and other batteries. We estimate that the National Park Service is responsible for over 12,000 major structures.

In addition to all of this, there probably are several hundred thousand archeological sites and over 10,000,000 museum artifacts. The National Park Service has a huge responsibility in the area of cultural resources, and it is growing, even in this era of no expansion. I feel that it is the area of the Service that will grow the most in future years.

The Service has become more sophisticated in its management of historical and archeological resources. For some years most of the Regional and park people in key positions came from big natural park backgrounds, and they applied the values and standards learned there to the historical and archeological resources in the Service. Such attitudes permitted the Superintendent of Great Smokies to burn down many of the mountain folks cabins. It allowed a superintendent to erase names, including that of Kit Carson, on Inscription Rock at El Morro National Monument. It permitted a superintendent to widen and pave over a significant

section of the C & O Canal towpath so maintenance trucks could drive over it. These are a few examples from a long "horror list" that my predecessors in the Washington Office kept for many years.

Our park managers and Regional Office people have become more sensitive to cultural resources and now put those resources in the forefront of their management thinking.

In addition, most of our park managers have achieved a higher level of sophistication in the care and use of historic structures. That attitude parallels a growth in sophistication by the historic preservation professionals in the Service. Most preservationists and park managers today see ways historic structures can be used for modern purposes without destroying the essential historical or architectural significance of those structures. To a great extent this change in attitude grew out of the historic preservation act of 1966, the efforts of the National Register program, and the growth in interest throughout the country in historic preservation generally.

There was a time when the Service felt that a park should have nice neat boundaries and that the government should own everything within those boundaries and to hell with what went on outside. Such an attitude resulted in the original legislation for the Charlestown Navy Yard, which was based on information supplied by the Service, providing for a boundary that was a precise square and excluded three of the most significant buildings in the yard. We have subsequently acquired these structures, but only after internal trauma and new legislation. With our greater sophistication, I think that if today we were to begin the planning for the Navy Yard, we would have a radically different park.

Lowell National Historical Park was a landmark in our changing attitude. Today we have a park that is not only nationally significant for the story it commemorates, but is also a key element in the reviving of a city through historic preservation. In Lowell the Park Service's primary role is interpretation, and the Service administers several sites scattered here and there in the city. The major development in the city is left to a federal commission, the city, and the state. Park activities are closely coordinated with these other three agencies. Lowell has influenced planning in the Service. Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site in Atlanta, for example, is patterned on Lowell.

In addition, the urban recreation areas—Golden Gate, Gateway and Cuyahoga—have contributed substantially to this more sophisticated attitude. Each of these parks came with a number of historic structures and these buildings had to be used for modern purposes. Today virtually all the structures in the highly significant Fort Mason in Golden Gate are being used and the essential historical character of this military port of embarkation has not been destroyed. The control tower and hangars at the historic Floyd Bennett Field at Gateway are being developed for recreation-

al and other uses with sensitivity being shown to the architectural qualities of the structures and the complex. At Cuyahoga the buildings of an old historic mill complex are being refurbished for the park's headquarters without damaging the historic scene.

The new leasing program also is going to have an impact on the use of historic structures, and their care. The legislation permits us to rent out structures in the parks that are on the National Register and to use monies received for the maintenance and rehabilitation of historic structures in the parks. This program is just now coming on line, and we anticipate that it will have a considerable impact on our management of historic resources.

In the archeological areas, I think the Service has been particularly progressive. The work we have done in remote sensing has not only given us a tremendous amount of new data without the destruction associated with digs, but perhaps more important we have developed considerable information about these new techniques for the broader archeological community. The work the Service has done in underwater archeology is pioneer work in the management of these resources.

Though the Service has come a long way in caring for its cultural resources we still have a long way to go in some areas. One of the principal problems we face is lack of basic data about parks and their resources. Though we have a List of Classified Structures, we don't have a similar listing of archeological sites. Many General Management Plans are being done without adequate historical and/or archeological data. We are still too much devoted to the construction approach to the preservation of historic buildings. A couple of Regions have taken the preservation/maintenance approach, but most still rely upon DSC to do what should essentially be maintenance work.

Another major problem the Service has is its museum objects. For too many years we have neglected these objects and failed to catalog them, to give them proper storage, or to give them adequate preservation treatment. Moreover; we have been unable to cull or collections and dispose of those objects our parks don't need. These problems are being wrestled with by our new Chief Curator and improvement is taking place, but so much needs to be done, because of years of neglect, that it will be some time before we will see substantial progress.

An area of deep concern is the preservation of the ships at Golden Gate. We inherited about a dozen vessels, most of which are in fair to very poor condition. One significant vessel, the steam lumber schooner WAPAMA, is *in extremis*, and I consider it to be the Service's number one unresolved historic preservation problem. Presently the WAPAMA has a spongy keelson and when it was taken out of the water it was found to be hogged 30 inches. Today this 300 foot vessel is out of the water sitting on a barge and its hull timbers are slowly twisting. To get it back in the

water, the ship will require \$3 to \$5 million worth of hull work. I suspect that if we do not do this work within the next year we may be on the verge of losing the vessel.

In the past several years we have heard much about threats to the parks, and certainly there are threats to the historical and archeological parks. Our natural parks are being affected by the quest for energy and so are some of our cultural parks. Chaco Canyon is a prime and the best known example of a cultural park that will be impacted by energy developments.

Many of the historical parks are feeling the pressures of encroaching civilization. Housing developments occur on the edges of parks, gas stations are built near historic sites, and sewerage disposal plants intrude on park scenes. Deservedly, these threats have received much publicity lately.

Funding restrictions encourage us to seek monies from sources other than the federal budget. The National Park Service has long sought help from the outside, both in forms of money and labor. We will now have to intensify our activities in this area. The largest effort we have underway now is the Statue of Liberty-Ellis Island Centennial Commission. Composed of prominent citizens and headed by Lee Iacocca, Chairman of the Chrysler Corporation, this Commission plans to raise \$230 million to rehab the Statue of Liberty and to restore the most historically significant section of Ellis Island.

Such efforts will probably be successful for places like the Statue of Liberty and Ellis Island for each has a strong emotional appeal. But most of the cultural parks don't have such a broad appeal. Indeed a number of the historic sites came into the System because the private sector could no longer keep them in repair. Generally, fund raising will be successful on only a limited scale. It will be helpful, but not a panacea.

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