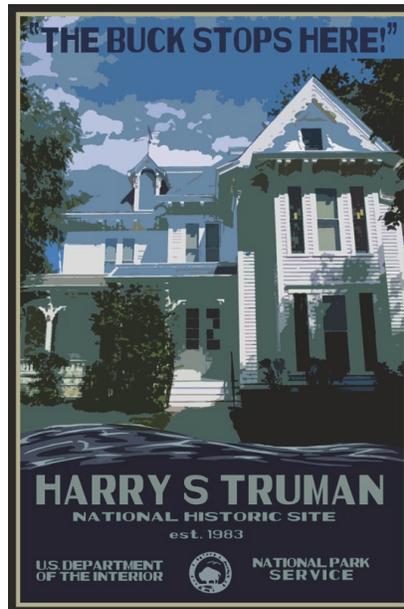


**THE ORDINARY HOME OF AN EXTRAORDINARY
MAN:
ADMINISTRATIVE HISTORY OF
HARRY S TRUMAN NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE
MISSOURI**



Prepared for:
U.S. Department of the Interior
National Park Service
Midwest Regional Office
Omaha, Nebraska



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2017

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MISSOURI
Administrative History

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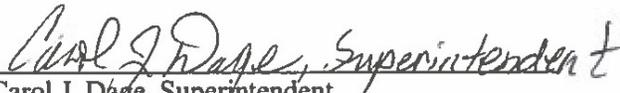


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List of Abbreviations

ACHP	Advisory Council on Historic Preservation
ADA	Americans with Disabilities Act
A/E	architect/engineering
ANCS	Automated National Catalog System
c.	circa
CBO	Congressional Budget Office
CBS	Columbia Broadcasting System
CLR	Cultural Landscape Report
CMP	Collections Management Plan
CMS	Content Management System
COR	Critical Operations Report
CRM	Cultural Resources Manager/Management
CRPP	Cultural Resources Preservation Program
D	Democrat
D.C.	District of Columbia
Demo	Demonstration
DOI	Department of the Interior
DOS	Disc Operating System
DOT	Department of Transportation
DSC	Denver Service Center
EA	Environmental Assessment
ENPMA	Eastern National Park and Monument Association
EOD	enter on duty
FMSS	Facility Management Software System
FTE	Full-time Equivalent
FY	Fiscal Year
GAO	General Accounting Office
GMP	General Management Plan
GSA	General Services Administration
H.R.	House of Representatives
HABS	Historic American Buildings Survey
HFC	Harpers Ferry Center
HFR	Historic Furnishings Report
HHS	Health and Human Services
HPTC	Historic Preservation Training Center
HRS	Historic Resources Study
HSR	Historic Structure(s) Report
HSTR	Harry S Truman National Historic Site (NPS internal designation)
HVAC	Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning (system)

ICMS	Interior Collection Management System
IDIQ	Indefinite Delivery/Indefinite Quantity
IG	Inspector General
IMPF	Independence Multi-Park Facility
IPM	Iowa Paint Manufacturing
IT	information technology
LCRA	Land Clearance for Redevelopment Authority
LCS	List of Classified Structures
LRIP	Long-Range Interpretive Plan
Maint.	Maintenance
MDNR	Missouri Department of Natural Resources
MN	Minnesota
MO	Missouri
MOA	Memorandum of Agreement
MoDOT	Missouri Department of Transportation
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MS	manuscript
MWAC	Midwest Archeological Center
MWRO	Midwest Regional Office
N.D.	no date
NBC	National Broadcasting Company
NCSC	National Catalog Steering Committee
NE	Nebraska
NEM	National Expansion Memorial
NHL	National Historic Landmark
NHS	National Historic Site
NPS	National Park Service
NRHP	National Register of Historic Places
NY	New York
OH	Ohio
OMB	Office of Management and Budget
ONPS	Operations of the National Park Service
OPM	Office of Personnel Management
P.L.	Public Law
PEL	Permissible Exposure Limits
PMIS	Project Management Information System
PPG	Pittsburgh Plate Glass
PRIP	Park Restoration and Improvement Program
PSU	Park Studies Unit

R	Republican
Rehab	Rehabilitation
Rep.	Representative
RFP	Request for Proposal
RLDS	Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints
RMP	Resources Management Plan
Rpt.	Report
S.	Senate
SC	South Carolina
Sen.	Senator
SFM	Statement for Management
SHPO	State Historic Preservation Officer
SRJA	Susan Richards Johnson Associates
V-E	Victory in Europe
Vol.	Volume
VOC	Visitor Orientation Center
WASO	Washington, D.C. Office
WPTC	Williamsport Preservation Training Center

Chapter 1: Introduction

Few U.S. presidents are so closely identified with a specific place as Harry S Truman is with Independence, Missouri. For instance, it is hard to think of George Washington without thinking of Mount Vernon, or to think of Thomas Jefferson without thinking of Monticello. In more recent times, Franklin D. Roosevelt is strongly associated with his Hyde Park, New York home, John F. Kennedy with the “Kennedy compound” at Hyannisport, on Cape Cod in Massachusetts, and Jimmy Carter with the town of Plains, Georgia. Truman’s association with Independence, Missouri, however, evinces the charm of a president of the United States so rooted in a small city in the Midwest that, after leaving office, he returned to it and resumed his life there. The story of Cincinnatus, the Roman emperor who returned to his farm after ruling the Empire, is most commonly applied to George Washington, who set the standard for a president’s return to private life. It can apply with equal, if not greater, accuracy to Truman in his return to Independence, Missouri.

Harry S Truman’s wife, the former Bess Wallace, also had roots in Independence. Her paternal grandparents, the Wallaces, were among the earliest settlers in Independence in the 1830s, and her maternal grandparents arrived in town shortly afterward, in the mid nineteenth century. Truman was a relative newcomer, having moved to Independence with his family in 1890 when he was six years old. The two knew each other as children. They met in Sunday School at the First Presbyterian Church, which both families attended. They graduated in the same high school class, and Harry courted Bess in early adulthood when she lived in her grandparents’ home at 219 North Delaware Street.¹ By that time, Harry was living at a farm his parents had purchased in Grandview, approximately 15 miles south of Independence. While courting Bess, he stayed with his cousins, who lived across the street from Bess’ home. Harry and Bess were married in Independence and moved into the Gates-Wallace Home, where several other members of the family also lived, after their honeymoon. Bess’s brothers lived with their wives in the two houses immediately behind the Wallace home, and the Trumans returned to their house in what amounted to a “family compound” regularly while living in Washington, D.C.

Clearly, this home and the surrounding community shaped the Trumans’ memories as well as their respective understandings of their places in the world. Harry Truman, particularly in his role as president, was lauded at the time and since for his small-town, Midwestern ways. Plain spoken, he was as straightforward in his dealings

¹ In recent years, the City of Independence standardized the designations of residential routes within the city, identifying those running north-south as “avenues” and those running east-west as “streets.” When the Trumans lived there, the address was 219 North Delaware Street, though now it is identified as 219 North Delaware Avenue. The National Park Service (NPS) objected to the renaming convention in its hope to retain everything at the house as the Trumans experienced it. After the city completed the change of names, NPS decided not to change the way that the house is identified and continues to refer to it as 219 North Delaware Street, though its official address is 219 North Delaware Avenue. This Administrative History will continue to use the historic designation, in accordance with National Park Service usage.

with foreign dignitaries as he was with his neighbors. It is, therefore, impossible to understand President Harry S Truman fully without understanding Mr. Harry S Truman from Independence, Missouri. The Harry S Truman National Historic Site (NHS), by preserving and interpreting the house where Bess Wallace Truman lived since the age of nineteen and where she and her husband lived for nearly all of their married lives, as well as the nearby places where their various family members lived, helps the visiting public to understand the relationship between the man and the place that shaped his view of the world.

Harry S Truman NHS: Overview

The National Park Service (NPS) has operated the Harry S Truman NHS since December 8, 1982, when James G. Watt, the Secretary of the Interior, designated the house a National Historic Site under the authority of the Historic Sites Act. The enabling legislation was signed by President Ronald Reagan on May 23, 1983. The NHS was then opened to the public at a ceremony on May 12, 1984, just days after what would have been Truman's 100th birthday. The NHS began with just the Trumans' property at 219 North Delaware, which included the home and the carriage house, also known as the barn, or the garage, on the lot. The National Park Service staff initially had offices in the Harry S. Truman Library and Museum, with a ticketing center planned for the first floor of a historic fire station on North Main Street, just off the Independence Courthouse Square.² The park initially planned to have office space in a historic house on West Maple Street only one and one-half blocks from the Truman Home, which had most recently served as a funeral home. This building was destroyed by fire on April 1, 1984, while it was being renovated and only six weeks before the park's opening. The use of the second floor of the historic fire station was quickly made available by the City of Independence, which remains the park's Headquarters Office. In 1989, Congress authorized the expansion of the NHS to include the home of the Nolands, Truman's aunt and uncle, across the street at 216 North Delaware, and the two houses behind the Truman Home that had belonged to Bess Wallace Truman's brothers, George and Frank Wallace, and their wives. Congress voted again in 1993 to expand the NHS by accepting a donation from Jackson County, Missouri, of the farm in Grandview, Missouri, that had belonged to Harry Truman's parents and where Harry worked and lived as a young man for more than a decade while courting Bess Wallace. The transfer of this property was finalized in 1994. In 2004, Congress agreed to add another five acres, part of the original Truman farm, to the Grandview Farm parcel to be included in the NHS.

² The name of the Truman Library has changed over the years. Initially called the Harry S. Truman Library, it was known as the Harry S. Truman Library and Museum by the early 1980s when NPS acquired the Truman Home. Later, near the turn of the century, the name changed again to the Harry S. Truman Presidential Library and Museum. This Administrative History will use the appropriate title in discussions of different eras. It should be noted also that the Harry S. Truman Presidential Library and Museum has consistently used the period after Mr. Truman's middle initial, which NPS does not. A further discussion of this issue can be found in Chapter 2.

Through all of these additions, NPS has sought to tell with ever-increasing comprehensiveness the story of how Harry and Bess Truman lived in, and interacted with, their home town of Independence, Missouri. In addition, NPS, through the Harry S Truman NHS, interprets for the visiting public the importance of the community in shaping Harry S Truman as the 33rd president of the United States. Through the NHS, the National Park Service provides interpretive and educational opportunities to the visiting public by means of the visitor center, which includes an introductory video; tours of the first floor of the Truman Home; and exhibits in the Noland Home across the street from the Truman Home. In addition, given the importance of the City of Independence to the Trumans, NPS works with city officials to preserve the Harry S Truman Historic District National Historic Landmark (NHL) and collaborates on other initiatives aimed at promoting the story of Harry S Truman and the history of his beloved home town.

The central feature of the NHS is the Truman Home at 219 North Delaware Street. Located at the corner of North Delaware and what is now West Truman Road, the home sits on a large lot with mature vegetation and is surrounded by a tall steel fence, painted, with decorative pickets. The carriage house is located to the rear, on the southeast corner of the lot. The home is a large, two-story, frame house in the Queen Anne style, irregular in plan, with a hipped roof and lower cross gables, several porches, including a screened porch and a second-floor sleeping porch, and wood architectural detailing typical of the style. It is painted white (Figure 1). The carriage house at the rear of the lot is a simple one and one-half story frame building with a side-gable roof surmounted by a square cupola, and featuring two roll-up garage doors beneath a small gable dormer that rises from the eave. The carriage house is also painted white (Figure 2).

Two small houses facing West Truman Road and located immediately behind the Truman Home belonged to Bess Wallace Truman's brothers. The house closest to the Truman Home, 605 West Truman Road, belonged to George Wallace and his wife, May. The house next door to it, at 601 West Truman Road, belonged to Frank Wallace and his wife, Natalie. The houses are separated from each other by a small lawn that is part of the George and May Wallace property. Both houses are one-story, frame bungalows with hipped roofs, generally rectangular in plan, with the narrow ends facing the street, and each with a projecting front porch. The George and May Wallace Home is clad in wood shingles and features a short wing that projects west, toward the Truman Home. Brick piers support the open gabled porch roof, while a one-car garage is at the rear of the lot. The Frank and Natalie Wallace Home, at 601 West Truman Road, has a symmetrical front façade and is clad in brick with an open porch supported by brick piers (Figure 3).

The Noland Home, which was owned by Harry Truman's aunt and uncle, is directly across North Delaware Street from the Truman Home. The Noland Home, like the Truman Home, is a two-story frame house in the Queen Anne style. Less ornate than the Truman Home, it features a porch that wraps around the east (front) and south sides. The porch roof is supported by wood piers with an open frieze consisting of turned spindles. The simple front entrance is located on the south side of the front façade,



Figure 1: West front of Truman Home, 1983; photo by Jack Boucher, HABS collection.



Figure 2. Truman Home-Carriage House, looking SE. Photo by author, 2015.



Figure 3. Frank Wallace Home (L) and George Wallace Home (R) looking west. Photo by author, 2015.



Figure 4. Noland Home looking NW. Photo by author 2015.

beneath the porch roof. A low stone retaining wall defines the front yard facing North Delaware Street (Figure 4).

The NHS administrative offices are located in the historic fire station at 223 North Main Street in Independence, at the corner of West Truman Road and North Main. The use of this building by NPS is made possible through a cooperative agreement between NPS and the City of Independence. It is a large, two-story brick building, with two wooden fire truck doors across the front façade, remnants of its historic use. These doors are flanked on each side by single entrances, one of which provides access to the visitor center. The second story of the building, containing the administrative offices, is symmetrical, with two tripartite windows in the center beneath contrasting masonry arches flanked on each side by a double window with a contrasting masonry keystone (Figure 5). A parapet rises from the eaves of the flat roof. The NHS also operates three remote, GSA-leased facilities: a maintenance shop on East Truman Road, and two curatorial facilities several miles from downtown Independence (Figures 6, 7).

The Truman Farm Home, also a National Historic Landmark, is located in Grandview, Missouri, approximately fifteen miles south of Independence. Set back from the busy commercial road, Blue Ridge Boulevard, the Truman Farm Home is isolated from the road by a long front yard with mature trees. It is a simple, two-story, frame house in a vernacular Italianate style with a steeply pitched hipped roof. The façade is symmetrical with a central entrance and two single windows, protected by an open one-story hipped roof porch supported by turned wooden columns. Four brick chimneys rise above the roof, two at the front ridge line and two at the back. Decorative brackets support the eaves (Figure 8). Outbuildings on the property are a historic garage and poultry house and a non-historic privy, smokehouse, and NPS maintenance barn (Figure 9). The property as expanded following the 2004 Congressional authorization also includes a modern one-story commercial building—a former restaurant that was later converted to a paint store, which fronts on Blue Ridge Boulevard (Figure 10).

This collection of buildings, including the farm that belonged to Harry Truman's parents and where he worked as a young man, the home where his wife lived from age nineteen and where Bess and Harry lived throughout their married lives, the home across the street from Bess' family where Harry's aunt and uncles lived, the two homes behind the Truman home where Bess' brothers lived, and the historic fire station housing the National Park Service visitor center allow NPS to tell a comprehensive story of Harry S Truman and his extended family. Truman was clearly a part of Independence and never forgot the close family ties that bound him to the city and Jackson County.

Harry S Truman and Independence: Historical Overview

Given his central role at the conclusion of World War II, and as the first president in Cold War America, Truman has drawn a large number of biographers and scholars to study various aspects of his life. The Harry S. Truman Library and Museum, through the efforts of its early Directors, provides a broad range of primary materials related to early



Figure 5. Administrative Office and Visitor Center for Harry S Truman NHS, North Main Street, Independence, looking SE. Photo by author 2015.



Figure 6. Maintenance Shop, West Truman Road, Independence, looking south. Photo by author, 2015.



Figure 7. Offsite curatorial space. Photo provided by Harry S Truman NHS.



Figure 8. Truman Farm Home looking NE. Photo by author, 2015.



Figure 9. Truman Farm outbuildings looking east. Photo by author, 2015.



Figure 10. Former Paint Store at Truman Farm looking SE. Photo by author 2015.

Independence, Missouri, and the childhood years of Harry S Truman and his wife, Bess Wallace Truman. This current project, an Administrative History of the NHS, is not as concerned with Harry S Truman, the man, as it is with how NPS has operated the NHS and interpreted the Trumans to the public. However, a brief introduction to Harry and Bess Truman's lives and their relationship to the history of Independence, Missouri, will help to explain why NPS has operated the site as it has. The following historical overview draws entirely from the valuable historical work previously undertaken by scholars who have studied Truman and the buildings that framed his life.³

Independence was established in 1827 as the seat of Jackson County, which had been created the year before and named in honor of then-Senator Andrew Jackson, soon to be President Jackson. The new town gained early notoriety for two distinct developments. Located within the Missouri River valley, Independence quickly became an important point on three of the major overland trails leading to the western frontier: the Santa Fe, Oregon, and California Trails.⁴ While the Missouri River promised access to the apparently limitless West, it was a difficult, unreliable, and often treacherous river to navigate. Early hopes for a water-borne highway to the West soon gave way to a variety of overland trails for different destinations. The Santa Fe, Oregon, and California were three of the more prominent trails, and two of them, the Oregon and California, appear to have originated in Independence. Other river towns also became points of departure for the trails: St. Joseph, Missouri; Nebraska City, Nebraska; and Council Bluffs, Iowa. Throughout the nineteenth century, the West was a powerful lure, and thousands of settlers hoped to find unbounded opportunities there. Independence, so closely associated with these trails, was, therefore, a destination point for those from the East who sought the new frontier, as well as for those who sought to provide goods and services to those westward bound. It, therefore, attracted a wide variety of people who remained for more or less time in the town.

Among the new settlers who arrived in Independence in its early years, hoping for new lives and new opportunities in the West, were members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, more commonly known as the Mormons. Originating in the "burned-over district" of central New York State in the 1820s, the Mormons under the leadership of their charismatic founder, Joseph Smith, quickly moved west where, they hoped, they would face less persecution and opposition. Upon arriving in Independence in 1831, Smith declared that this new town was Zion, the site of the promised land where his ideal Christian community would be built. With this pronouncement, ever more members of the church arrived. The rapid increase in the Mormon population in 1832 and

³ In particular, this brief historical overview is based principally on the following works: Ron Cockrell, *Historic Structures Report: History and Significance, Harry S Truman National Historic Site, Independence, Missouri* (NPS: Midwest Regional Office, Omaha, NE, 1984); Jon E. Taylor, *A President, a Church, and Trails West: Competing Histories in Independence, Missouri* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2008); Margaret Truman, *Harry S. Truman* (NY: William Morrow Co., 1973), particularly Chapters 2 and 3.

⁴ In 1821, the eastern terminus of what became the Santa Fe Trail was in Franklin, Missouri. By 1832 the terminus shifted to Independence, Missouri, and by 1845, the trail's terminus was in Westport Landing, near Kansas City. Independence was also the southernmost trailhead for the California and Oregon Trails; other trailheads included St. Joseph, Missouri, and Council Bluffs, Iowa.

1833 created tensions with the non-Mormon residents and new settlers, who perceived the new arrivals as a political and economic threat to the existing order of the town. As in other locations before and after, the Mormons in Independence were subject to violent reprisals, and were forced out of Independence by December 1833. After attempting several settlements in Missouri through the mid-1830s, Smith and his followers settled in Nauvoo, Illinois. Facing opposition from outside the Mormon community, and dissent and nonconformity from within, Joseph Smith and his brother were killed in 1844 while jailed in nearby Carthage, Illinois.

The Mormon church was split by dissenting factions following Smith's death. The dominant group was under the direction of Brigham Young, who eventually led the community to settle at Salt Lake City, Utah. Others who dissented from such Mormon practices and doctrines as polygamy and the baptism of the dead eventually came together, and, in 1860, most of them coalesced under the leadership of Joseph Smith III, the grandson of the Mormon founder. Joseph Smith III then led what would become the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (RLDS), some members of which returned to Independence in hopes of fulfilling their founder's vision of Zion.⁵ As more members of the RLDS returned to Independence in the years during and following the Civil War, the leadership of the church relocated there in late nineteenth century, and the church established its base there in the early twentieth century.

Independence in the late nineteenth century, then, was characterized by its tradition of the westbound trails and the people that they drew, and by the rapid influx of RLDS congregants, who took a number of leadership roles in the community. Harry Truman came to the town as a child with his parents, John and Martha Truman, and grew up within these traditions. Harry S Truman was born May 8, 1884, in Lamar, Missouri, the oldest of three children. Harry's middle initial, S, did not signify any name in particular, though it was generally understood to refer either to Solomon Young, his maternal grandfather, or to Anderson Shipp Truman, his paternal grandfather. His parents were transient farmers who worked on several farms in Missouri after marrying in 1881. These included the farm belonging to Martha Truman's parents in Grandview, Missouri, when they were first married, and again from 1887 to 1890. When young Harry was six years old, in 1890, John and Martha Truman moved from Grandview to Independence, seeking a better education for their three children and more opportunities for themselves. By then, Independence was a growing town that was a local center for trade and small manufacturing, including several businesses owned and managed by George P. Gates, the grandfather of Harry's future wife, Elizabeth Virginia "Bess" Wallace. Bess was the oldest child of Margaret Elizabeth "Madge" Gates and David Wallace, a local public official and scion of one of the oldest families in Independence. Bess, born in 1885 in Independence, first met Harry in 1890 in Sunday School at the First Presbyterian Church shortly after Harry's family arrived in town.

⁵ In 2001, the Reorganized Church of Latter Day Saints changed its name to "Community of Christ." This Administrative History uses the acronym RLDS to signify the church under its recent as well as historic name.

Once in Independence, Harry Truman's parents bought a house at 619 South Chrysler Avenue. From this house, which still stands, his father operated a livestock-trading business while also operating a farm just outside of town. In 1896, the family moved to another house at 909 West Waldo Avenue, not far from 608 North Delaware Street (now addressed 610), where Bess lived. The two children knew each other well, attending high school and often studying together.

Although Harry and his family were newcomers to Independence, his future wife, Bess, was solidly rooted in the town on both her mother's and her father's sides. Her maternal grandfather, George Porterfield Gates, arrived in Independence in 1865. George P. Gates was drawn to the still-young town by the business opportunities that resulted from its location on the several trails headed to the western frontier. He first opened a sawmill, which was successful. He subsequently created other businesses including a mining and smelting firm and a flour mill, and was very active in community organizations. Already a successful farmer and business man, his co-ownership of the Waggoner-Gates Milling Company, which produced "Queen of the Pantry" flour, cemented his fortune. In 1867, George P. Gates purchased two lots in what was identified as James F. Moore's addition, on what is now North Delaware Street. The lot likely included a small house where the family lived, which Gates expanded to the present house in 1885. In 1871, Gates purchased the two lots behind the house on what is now West Truman Road.

George P. Gates' daughter, Madge, married David Wallace in 1883 at the First Presbyterian Church. David's father, Benjamin F. Wallace, had arrived in Independence in 1833, shortly after the community was formed. He was elected Mayor of Independence in 1869 and later represented Jackson County in the Missouri Legislature. David Wallace, Bess Truman's father, was born in 1860 and began work at age fourteen as an Assistant Docket Clerk of the Missouri Senate. After their marriage, Madge and David lived in a house at 117 West Ruby Street, where Bess, their first child, was born on February 13, 1885, and their next child, Frank Gates Wallace, was born on March 4, 1887.

Madge and David Wallace were regularly short of money, and lived for several years in Madge's parents' house at 219 North Delaware. In 1890, they purchased a house at 608 North Delaware, two blocks from Madge's parent's house. Bess's two youngest brothers, George Porterfield Wallace (born May 9, 1892) and David Frederick Wallace (born January 17, 1900), were born in this house, and the children regularly visited their grandparents only a few blocks away. David Wallace held a series of public positions while Bess was growing up, including Deputy Jackson County Recorder, Jackson County Treasurer, and Deputy United States Surveyor of Customs in Kansas City.

Unfortunately, David Wallace's recurring problems with money and alcoholism proved fatal. On June 17, 1903, David Wallace committed suicide, leaving Madge and their four children to manage without him. Humiliated by her husband's suicide, Madge took her children to stay with relatives in Colorado Springs, Colorado, for a time. They returned the following year, in 1904, when Bess was nineteen years old, and moved into Madge's parents' house at 219 North Delaware. Madge cared for her elderly parents and,

with Bess' help, raised her children. Bess, by then, attended Barstow, a post-secondary finishing school for girls in Kansas City.

While again living with her mother and brothers in her grandparents' house, Bess Wallace was reunited with her childhood friend, Harry S Truman. Harry and Bess had finished high school in Independence together in 1901, but Harry then left to take a succession of jobs in Independence and Kansas City for several years, including work as a timekeeper for the Santa Fe Railroad, as a bank clerk, and as a theater usher. In 1906, his parents asked him to help them with the farm. They had returned to the family farm in Grandview in 1902 after losing much of their money speculating in the Kansas City grain market and having to sell their house on Waldo Avenue. It was a substantial farm of over 600 acres, together with an uncle's farm of 300 acres, and required extensive management that John Truman was not able to do alone. John Truman died in 1914, leaving Harry in charge of the family farming business until 1917, when he enlisted in the Army.

Harry began to court Bess Wallace in earnest while he lived on his parents' farm in Grandview. Fortunately, he had relatives who lived across the street from the Gates' family home where Bess lived with her mother and younger brothers. John Truman's sister, Ella, married Joseph Noland, and had four children, three of whom survived, near in age to Harry. Harry and Bess frequently met at the Noland's house during their high school years, and again when Harry began courting Bess in 1910. The story of how they reunited has become local legend: Harry's Aunt Ella needed to return a cake plate to Madge Wallace, and Harry, then twenty-six years old, volunteered to take it across the street. Bess answered the door, beginning a prolonged courtship. Harry regularly traveled from Grandview to Independence by taking the train to Kansas City and then transferring to the Independence streetcar until he purchased his own car in 1914. When he came to Independence to court Bess, he conveniently had lodgings with his aunt and uncle across the street from her family home.

In 1917, Harry Truman enlisted in the Army and became a member of the American Expeditionary Force to France during World War I. He was commissioned on July 11, 1918, and assumed command of Battery D, 129th Field Artillery, 35th Division of the Missouri National Guard. Before leaving for his training at Fort Sill, Oklahoma, Harry proposed marriage to Bess, and she accepted his proposal. In France, Harry was promoted to Captain with command over two hundred men. After seeing extensive military action in France, he returned to Kansas City in 1919. Shortly after his return, Harry and Bess were married at the Trinity Episcopal Church in Independence, on June 28, 1919, and honeymooned in Detroit, Michigan. Since her grandfather, George P. Gates, had died a year before, Bess was given away by her younger brother, Frank Gates Wallace.

After the wedding, Harry and Bess Truman moved into her grandparents' house on North Delaware Street. Bess' mother, Madge Wallace, who still lived there, was in poor health and restricted in her movements; Bess undertook the care of both her mother and her grandmother, Elizabeth Gates. Two of Bess' younger brothers, Frank and

George, who were already married, lived in the two bungalows immediately behind the family's main house, which their grandfather, George P. Gates, had built, creating a close-knit family setting. Harry went into business with an Army friend, opening a men's furnishings store, or haberdashery, in Kansas City, and also became actively involved in a number of civic groups. The business collapsed in 1922 following the recession of 1920-21. Before his business collapsed, he was approached by another Army friend, the nephew of Kansas City political boss, Thomas Pendergast. The Pendergasts, who headed up one of the two factions of the Democratic Party in Jackson County, enlisted Harry to run for the post of Eastern District Judge of Jackson County, an administrative, not a judicial, position. With the support of both the Pendergast machine and his former Army friends, Truman won first the Democratic primary and then the election, and took office in early 1923.

Truman lost his bid for reelection in 1924, but the year proved to be an eventful one for the Trumans, nonetheless. Their daughter, Margaret, was born on February 17, 1924, in the North Delaware Street house. With this additional responsibility, and in the wake of his electoral defeat, Harry took a succession of sales positions in the Independence and Kansas City areas for the next two years, and continued his active involvement with a number of civic groups. In 1924, Bess' grandmother, Elizabeth Gates, died, leaving the bulk of her estate to her oldest son, Frank, an invalid then living in Colorado Springs, Colorado. Madge Wallace, Bess' mother and Frank Gates' older sister, used her share of the inheritance and additional funds to purchase her parents' house. The Gates home then became the Wallace home. In addition to Madge Wallace and the Truman family, Harry, Bess, and Margaret, Bess's brother, David Frederick "Fred" Wallace, his wife, Christine, and their two children, David and Marian, also lived in the house at 219 Delaware Street. Margaret Truman later would humorously refer to this large collection of family members as "Wallaceville."

In 1926, again with the backing of Pendergast, Harry was elected as the Presiding Judge of Jackson County, the chief administrative position for the entire county. Harry was successful in this role, instituting a road-building campaign, spearheading an extensive remodeling of the Courthouse on the Independence Square, and leading New Deal employment programs in the early 1930s. He then built on his success as Presiding Judge to mount a statewide campaign for the U.S. Senate in 1934. He traveled extensively throughout the state, trying to overcome the stigma of being "owned" by the Pendergast political machine of Kansas City by declaring his independence from the machine. It was a difficult sell, but he was successful and was elected as U.S. Senator from Missouri in November 1934.

During his years as U.S. Senator, the Trumans divided their time between Washington, D.C., and Independence, Missouri, spending as much time at 219 North Delaware as they could. Their daughter Margaret, who was ten years old when her father was first elected U.S. Senator, grew up in both places, spending the falls in school in Independence and the springs at Gunston Hall, a prominent school for young women in Washington. While in Washington, D.C., the family lived in a succession of apartments, a pattern that continued after 1940 when Harry won a second term as U.S. Senator. In the

Senate, Harry Truman was active in committees pertaining to railroads, interstate commerce, and military appropriations, and, in early 1941, took charge of the Senate Special Committee to Investigate the National Defense Program. This committee subsequently became known as the Truman Committee.

The work of this committee was immensely popular and gained Truman a great deal of positive attention in the national press by rooting out poor and unethical management in the defense industry. His work as the head of the Truman Committee, along with other considerations, led Roosevelt to select Truman as his vice presidential running mate for the 1944 election. Roosevelt won, as he had in the previous three presidential elections, but his health was clearly failing, and he died on April 12, 1945. That evening, just three months after being sworn in as vice president, Harry S Truman was sworn in as the president of the United States.

Truman finished this first term as president, and, in 1948, narrowly, and famously, was reelected. Popular odds were against the Democrats in 1948: the New Deal of Truman's predecessor was losing popularity in the post-war boom; the Civil Rights platform drove Southern Democrats, led by Senator Strom Thurmond (D-SC), to form the Dixiecrat Party; and the Republicans ran the popular governor of New York, Thomas Dewey, who had run for president against Roosevelt in 1944. Two days after his successful reelection, Truman traveled back to Washington, D.C. In St. Louis, he posed for one of the great political photographs in American history, holding up a copy of the *Chicago Daily Tribune* with a headline announcing Dewey's victory.

Harry and Bess Truman regularly visited Independence during their time in the White House, earning their home the nickname, the "Summer White House." While Bess and Margaret Truman spent nearly every summer in Independence, Harry Truman made visits as often as he was able, and the family gathered in Independence for Christmas every year of his presidency except 1947 and 1952. His trips home frequently included visits to his mother at the family farm in Grandview. While the family was away from Independence, the Truman's home was tended by Bess' two brothers, George and Frank and their wives, who lived in the bungalows behind the Truman's home.

While in Independence, the Trumans were guarded by the president's Secret Service detail in spite of the Trumans' distaste for this necessity. At first, a portion of the carriage house behind the home was converted for use by the Secret Service officers, and a security booth was later added to the grounds. In the fall of 1949, after hordes of visitors proved too much for the Secret Service detail to control, and the house was damaged as a result, President Truman agreed to the construction of a tall steel fence around his house.

In February 1951, the Twenty-second Amendment to the U.S. Constitution went into effect and limited a president's tenure to two elected terms. The amendment specified that no one who had served more than two years of another president's term, such as Truman had, could be elected more than once. Truman, as the sitting president, however, was exempt from this regulation. Despite President Truman's eligibility in

1952, he declined to run. In addition to wanting to return to Independence, his poll numbers had sagged significantly during his second term, due, in part, to the lingering conflict in Korea. The Trumans, therefore, returned to Independence in January 1953, and Harry began his post-presidential career. Bess' mother, Madge Wallace, had died in the White House in early December, and the Trumans traveled to Independence that month for the funeral. They returned to Washington before Christmas and remained at the White House until President Eisenhower's inauguration on January 20, 1953. Then, they packed their belongings, had them shipped to Independence, and boarded a train for home. Arriving late at night on January 22, 1953, they were greeted by thousands of neighbors and well-wishers.

The Trumans lived in Independence for nearly twenty years after they left Washington, until Harry died on December 26, 1972. As described later in this chapter, Harry occupied his post-presidential time by writing his memoirs and overseeing the development of the Harry S. Truman Library, which was constructed barely one mile north of his house and completed in the summer of 1957. He remained active in national politics, frequently hosting political figures at his house, but he also was a familiar figure in Independence taking his brisk morning walks.

Federal Commemoration of Harry S Truman

When Harry S Truman became the president of the United States, in April 1945, and again, in November 1948, he made his hometown of Independence a place of interest to the federal government. His post-presidential legacy in Independence began while he was president, which put the city on the map for federal action. Although the legislation pertaining specifically to the Harry S Truman NHS began in the early 1980s and has continued into the 2010s, discussions of ways to commemorate Truman and his connection to Independence go back much further in time.

The citizens and political leaders of Independence were justly proud of their native son who became the president of the United States. From the beginning of his term as president, when raised to the office at the death of his predecessor, Franklin D. Roosevelt, Truman made clear his ties to, and affection for, Independence. The feeling was returned in spades, with large public turnouts for his regular visits home. As early as 1949, not long after his dramatic win in the 1948 elections, two separate efforts were begun to preserve Truman's legacy: a historic site, and a presidential library.

The precedent for a presidential library, now expected for every retiring president, was quite recent when Truman was in office. His predecessor, Franklin Roosevelt, created the tradition in 1938 by announcing his plan to create the first presidential library at his house in Hyde Park, New York. This was a new idea; previous presidents had taken many of their papers with them as their personal property when they left office. Congress agreed in 1939 to allow the National Archives to administer the presidential library of Franklin Roosevelt, which was built using private funds. Roosevelt opened the library, designed to house his correspondence and other papers and memorabilia, in 1941.

The notion of a Truman presidential library in Independence first emerged as an idea for a memorial. The proposed location of the library changed over the years, as Truman showed an unusual degree of indecision from the late 1940s into the mid-1950s as he vacillated among several choices.⁶ As early as 1945, the head of the Kansas City Museum suggested to Truman that the Museum could create a room to house some of his documents and artifacts. Truman thought that this would be a nice idea, but believed that it should be in Independence, not Kansas City. He turned to Roger Sermon, the Mayor of Independence, about the idea. Sermon was enthusiastic and worked with the Independence City Council to find a place to house and display papers and artifacts from Truman's time in office. The idea languished for several years but was resurrected in 1949 when Sermon wrote to President Truman to suggest building a new museum to serve as a memorial to the city's most famous son. Others in Independence and Kansas City supported the idea and formed the Truman Foundation to raise funds. Truman initially demurred, thinking the idea was to create a memorial to his presidency, which made him uncomfortable, but planning continued. Sermon died in 1950, and his successor as mayor and as chairman of the Truman Foundation, Robert Weatherford, wrote to Truman to suggest, instead, a presidential library, which Truman supported.

Truman, however, had already begun working with a separate group of people on the east coast who had formed the Harry S. Truman Library, Inc. in the summer of 1950 with the idea of raising funds for a presidential library and planning for its design and construction. Resisting pressure to locate the library in the Washington, D.C. area, and contrary to his earlier response to the head of the Kansas City Museum, Truman thought that the library would be in Grandview, Missouri, home of Truman's family farm, which was still owned by his family. Difficulties with locating an exact site on the farm, and growing dissension among his family members who still lived on the farm and were becoming dismayed at the prospect, ended the Grandview plan. The issue of the location of his presidential library remained uncertain through the rest of Truman's presidency and for more than a year after he left office, although planning for the project carried on. At the same time, legislators were working behind the scenes, guided by Truman's advisors, to create legislation that would allow presidents to donate their papers, and the facilities to house them, to the federal government.

When Truman left office in January 1953, most of his presidential papers were moved to Kansas City while some were stored in the Memorial Building in Independence. Most were stored in the Federal Reserve Building and the rest in the Jackson County Courthouse. By 1954, Truman had finally abandoned the Grandview location, but was in despair over not knowing where the library would be. The University of Kansas City (now the University of Missouri—Kansas City) and the University of Missouri—Columbia both offered space on their respective campuses, but Truman was satisfied with neither of them. Instead, he turned back to Robert Weatherford, the mayor

⁶ The following discussion of the origins of the Harry S. Truman Library draws primarily from two sources: Taylor, *A President, a Church, and Trails West*, 90-98; and Raymond H. Geselbracht, "Creating the Harry S. Truman Library: The First Fifty Years," *The Public Historian*, Vol. 28, No. 3 (Summer 2006), 37-78. The accounts differ slightly, and an attempt has been made to reconcile them.

of Independence, about the problem and “confided that he would really like his library to be in Independence.”⁷ Within weeks, Weatherford, working with the Independence City Council, identified a tract of about thirteen acres—much of it a portion of Slover Park, which could be donated to the federal government for the library. Truman was eager to begin work on his presidential memoirs, which required access to his library, and agreed to the plan. The City Council then agreed to donate the land, which required acquiring seven homes, to the federal government for the Harry S. Truman Library.⁸ The Council also acquired land adjacent to the library lot that would provide for an interchange providing access to U.S. Highway 24 immediately south of the city property. With the location settled, the board of Harry S. Truman Library, Inc. began more actively to raise the funds for the new library.

Congress, aware that Truman was planning his presidential library, passed the Presidential Libraries Act of 1955 that allowed for privately funded, but federally administered, facilities. The Act encouraged former presidents to donate their papers and other historical materials for the benefit of the public by making them accessible through the National Archives system. Design and construction of the new Harry S. Truman Library began in 1955, with Edward Nield, of Shreveport, Louisiana, serving as the lead architect. Nield, whom Truman had chosen to design the renovations of the courthouse in Independence in the 1930s and who consulted on the renovations of the White House while Truman was in office, died in the summer of 1955. His work was assumed by Alonzo H. Gentry, of the firm of Gentry and Voskamp in Kansas City. Construction began on Truman’s birthday, May 8, 1955, and was largely complete by the spring of 1957. The Harry S. Truman Library was officially opened on July 6, 1957 (Figure 11).

As Truman’s associates in Independence and Washington, D.C., were beginning to plan his presidential library, a separate move was under way to preserve Truman’s home as a historic site. Congress had passed a Joint Resolution in early 1944 to designate Franklin D. Roosevelt’s house at Hyde Park, setting the precedent to establish a living president’s home as a national historic site. In 1949, NPS Associate Director Conrad Wirth, wrote to the Secretary of the Interior, Oscar Chapman, regarding a draft Joint Resolution to preserve Truman’s home in Independence as an historic site. The idea of constructing a presidential library for Truman was still new and unformed, and Wirth assumed that Truman’s presidential papers would be kept at his home. The draft Joint Resolution was worded vaguely, however, to allow any of the executive departments to accept the home “together with such historical material as the donor may wish to include. This could permit the President to make the donation to the Archivist of the United States if he felt that the library and preservation of the papers were the predominating factor, or he could donate it to the Secretary of the Interior if he felt that it should be established as a national monument or an historic site.”⁹

⁷ Gedelbracht, “Creating the Harry S. Truman Library,” 47.

⁸ This transaction is detailed in Taylor, *A President, a Church, and Trails West*, 95.

⁹ Memorandum, Conrad L. Wirth to Secretary Chapman, December 7, 1949. Typescript MS in files of Harry S Truman NHS.

Nothing came of this early attempt to commemorate Harry S Truman by preserving his house. When Truman had the time to contemplate his legacy, he did so in terms of a library which, he assumed, would have a museum of sorts to house “a great many gadgets and things which have been sent that ought to be saved somewhere.”¹⁰



Figure 11. Harry S. Truman Presidential Library and Museum, looking NW Photo by author, 2015.

Truman remained reluctant to see a formal memorial to him in Independence, telling the mayor of Independence, Roger Sermon, in a famous quote that “I’ve never been very much in favor of memorials to people who are alive. You never can tell what foolishness they may get into before they get into a pine box and then the memorial sometimes has to be torn down.”¹¹ By 1960, however, as he was in the midst of writing his memoirs, he was beginning to have a change of heart, telling the Director of the Truman Library, Philip Brooks, that he hoped that his home “would eventually come under the same authority as that of the Library.”¹² Forward movement was slow, however, and, in 1964, the Secretary of the Interior, Stewart Udall, asked for Truman’s input on an NPS initiative to create a National Historic Landmark (NHL) to honor each president. Truman was initially reluctant, but he agreed to give it thought. Caught up in political wrangling between NPS and President Lyndon Johnson regarding the designation of Johnson’s ranch in Texas as an NHL, NPS put aside the designation of Truman’s house.¹³

These political issues were settled by the late 1960s, and the idea of commemorating Truman and his connection to Independence continued to be promoted

¹⁰ Truman quoted in Geselbracht, 38.

¹¹ Quoted in *ibid.*

¹² Truman quoted in Taylor, *A President, a Church, and Trails West*, 110.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 110-113.

by Philip Brooks, the Director of the Truman Library. At the same time that the federal political issues were easing off, however, local political issues regarding historic preservation were beginning to appear, a political issue that would continue to divide the community for decades. A complicating factor in the city's relationship with historic preservation was tourism, which the city's leaders were just beginning to develop in the 1960s and 1970s. While many in the city distrusted historic preservation as a hindrance to progress, others recognized the value of history, and historic buildings, to attracting tourists to the city. Clearly the first big step was the Truman Library, then being built near Highway 24 in Independence. City leaders recognized its potential to draw large numbers of visitors to Independence, and sought to make the most of this opportunity.

In the late 1950s, the city developed plans to redevelop a 520-acre section of Independence between the new Truman Library and the Courthouse Square, and applied for federal urban renewal funds to do so. The proposed redevelopment was aimed at a neighborhood known locally as the Neck, which comprised working-class families both white and African American, and which was seen as an eyesore by local leaders. In order to secure the federal grant, the City of Independence in 1962 established a board, the Land Clearance for Redevelopment Authority (LCRA), which would make decisions regarding properties to be acquired and demolished, and what to do with the land that was then acquired. The LCRA was concerned with two projects: the Northwest Parkway Project, which included the Neck neighborhood, and the Courthouse Square. The most contentious of these, however, was the Northwest Parkway Project.¹⁴

The goal of the Northwest Parkway Project to remove what was described as an unsightly, deteriorated neighborhood that lay between the Courthouse Square, where the city hoped to base its tourism and redevelopment efforts, and the Truman Library, which was an established draw for visitors. This in turn would require acquiring, and demolishing, nearly all of the houses in the Neck neighborhood, though the plans for what would be built in the place of the houses remained uncertain through much of the 1960s. The plan was actively supported by the Director of the Truman Library, Philip Brooks, by the Jackson County Historical Society, and by Harry Truman himself. As Jon Taylor has noted, Truman was ambivalent about historic preservation, frequently expressing fond memories of the historic buildings on the Courthouse Square, but also aware that change was coming. "Clearly," Taylor concluded, "Truman was interested in the preservation of old buildings, but his view of preservation did not extend to working-class residential districts such as those found in the Northwest Parkway." Brooks, meanwhile, "did not see the area as significant to the city's past," and saw the Project as a way "to enhance the city's number one tourist attraction—the Truman Library."¹⁵

A minority of the houses that would be acquired and demolished by the Northwest Parkway Project were owned by African-American families. These families claimed a greater impact, however, since their ability to relocate within Independence was more difficult because of their race. Two organizations representing their interests, the Citizen's Progressive Committee and a local branch of the national civil rights

¹⁴ Taylor, *A President, a Church, and Trails West*, 101-110, recounts the history of this project.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 104-105.

organization, the Congress on Racial Equality, led the movement against the project and its disparate impacts by leading petition drives and leading a demonstration at the Truman Library on July 4, 1966 when Harry Truman was speaking. Despite their efforts, the LCRA began acquiring properties in 1962, and continued through 1968; the Authority acquired 208 of the 345 total structures, including houses and outbuildings, and demolished 167 buildings. In November 1966, LCRS concurred with the City Council's decision to create a park on the vacant land, together with a parkway that connected the Truman Library to the Courthouse Square.¹⁶

While what were then the historic preservation interests in Independence, including the Trumans, supported the Northwest Parkway Project with its demolition of a historic neighborhood, they were more conscious of the immediate neighborhood surrounding the Trumans' home. Two threats in particular brought home the threat to the neighborhood. In the mid-1960s the Center Stake branch of the RLDS acquired and demolished the Watson Memorial Methodist Church, located at the corner of West Maple and North Delaware across the street from the Truman home, and built a new office building in 1966; in the early 1970s, the organization attempted without success to acquire the homes next door to the new Center Stake building, including what is now the Noland Home, for a parking lot. In 1967, another redevelopment was planned for North Delaware close to the Truman Library, an attempt to rezone the area from residential to planned apartment residential. This time Harry Truman joined in opposition to the plan, which was successful, and the neighborhood remained intact.

In the face of these threats to the neighborhood surrounding the Truman Home, however, local officials and NPS increased their efforts at protection. As Taylor has noted, the modern historic preservation movement was still in its infancy in the mid-1960s. The National Register of Historic Places was created only in 1966 with the passage of the National Historic Preservation Act, which included historic districts as potentially significant resources. Until this time, historic preservation was focused on the protection of homes or other buildings directly associated with historically significant individuals, but the new National Register criteria for significance opened up new possibilities for finding significance in more ordinary settings. The late 1960s and early 1970s were therefore experimental years for the National Register; while in more recent years it is rare to find historic districts that are significant for their association with individuals, there were few precedents in the early 1970s.

While the initial concern of the NPS was for Truman's home and the contents, Brooks was interested in the surrounding neighborhood as well, an interest that NPS soon shared. Discussions among Brooks, James Rhoads, the Archivist of the United States, and NPS officials took place in the early 1970s to determine how best to commemorate Truman and his legacy, and all agreed that a historic district surrounding Truman's home would best "preserve it and protect it from deterioration." The creation of a NHL historic district centered on Truman's home would wait, however, for the former president's approval. The staff at the Truman Library, including Brooks and his assistant, Benedict Zobrist, who was hired in 1969 and would soon take over as Director, continued to meet

¹⁶ Ibid., 104-110.

with Truman and encourage designation of the neighborhood. Their goal was to see the neighborhood kept intact in the face of pressures for redevelopment by the nearby RLDS church, which was in the process of planning its new temple.¹⁷

The staff at the Truman Library also was in contact with Truman's daughter, Margaret Truman Daniel and her husband, E. Clifton Daniel, Jr. While Truman kept silent publicly for fear of tipping the National Park Service's hand, he wrote to his son-in-law in September 1971, that he approved the designation of the neighborhood as a NHL. The National Park Service received word of Truman's approval but wished to keep the proposed NHL a secret until it could be finalized as a way to forestall potential local opposition. The National Park Service developed the NHL nomination in the early fall of 1971, and Secretary of the Interior Rogers C. B. Morton approved the designation on November 11, 1971. The designation was kept under wraps until February 11, 1972, when it was announced to the public.

The new NHL district contained seventy-eight properties, ranging in age from the late nineteenth century to the 1960s and early 1970s, with a mix of residential architectural styles. While the residents in the new district, Truman's neighbors, were generally supportive of the designation, the staff of the Truman Library were disappointed by the low level of documentation in the nomination, Zobrist going so far as to call it a "bureaucratic fiasco."¹⁸ It was a significant designation, however, that tied together Truman's beloved home and the Harry S Truman Library by means of the neighborhood through which the former president took his daily walks. Truman's home and his legacy in Independence were, therefore, clearly represented by its landscape: the network of buildings, streets, friends, and neighbors which had sustained Harry and Bess Truman throughout their lives. The home where the Trumans continued to live for another decade, however, remained just one among many houses in the NHL district neighborhood. Its separate designation as a National Historic Site in its own right, a prospect with which Truman likely was uncomfortable, would have to wait.

¹⁷ Ibid., 113-117.

¹⁸ Quoted in *ibid*, 117.

Chapter 2: Legislative History

The home at 219 North Delaware Street, where Harry and Bess Truman lived out their married lives and where Bess lived for a decade after her husband's death in 1972, was one among many in the Harry S Truman Historic District NHL. It was the centerpiece, to be sure, the reason there was a historic district in the first place, but not otherwise singled out. No legislation was required, as the designation of the NHL Historic District was a matter for the Department of the Interior only.

The possibility of a National Historic Site commemorating the life of Harry S Truman dated back to 1949 when the Director and Assistant Director of NPS drafted a Joint Resolution allowing any federal agency to accept the home of President Truman as a historic site. The draft Joint Resolution never went any further, but, clearly, the idea was on the table. The possibility of a Harry S Truman NHS remained active in 1977, when it was one of a series of recommendations for NPS. The Associate Director of NPS was in touch with Margaret Truman Daniel, but, until she gave the go-ahead, he said, "we are making no visible effort on this proposal."¹⁹

Truman Home: 219 North Delaware Street

This changed in 1982. Bess Wallace Truman, who was married to Harry S Truman from June 28, 1919, until his death on December 26, 1972, died on October 18, 1982. She had continued to live in the house after her husband died, leading a relatively quiet life, yet occasionally in the public eye when politicians would come to visit. Bess Truman first made her will in 1974, in which she left the house at 219 North Delaware in Independence, Missouri, to the United States of America, "to be held and operated by it under the direction of the Archivist of the United States in conjunction with the Harry S. Truman Library." Recognizing that this would allow public access to the house, she specified in Article II of her will "that during the life of my daughter, MARGARET TRUMAN DANIEL, the area above the first floor of my residence shall not be available to the public." She also recommended that the Archivist of the United States allow Margaret to stay in the house one week of each year during her lifetime. In addition, she left the contents of the house that did not belong to Margaret to the Archivist of the United States. The will did not specify which items belonged to Margaret.

In the first codicil to her will, executed on November 11, 1976, Bess clarified the specific lot on which her house sat, without altering any of the provisions of the original will. In a second codicil, however, dated May 5, 1978, Bess Truman made an important change to the management of the house. In this second codicil, she specified that the

¹⁹ Memorandum, Acting Regional Director, Midwest Region to Chief of Legislation, WASO [Washington Office], December 22, 1977. Typescript MS on file at Harry S Truman NHS.

manner in which the Archivist of the United States would use the house during the term of Margaret's life "shall be approved in writing by my said daughter."²⁰

The Trumans had worked closely with the staff of the Truman Library since it opened in 1957, and Bess Wallace Truman clearly was comfortable with them. Her decision to leave the home and the majority of its contents to the United States of America, however, under the direction of the Archivist of the United States, involved two federal entities that had no interest in managing the Truman Home as a historic site: the General Services Administration, which administers the federal government's real property, and what was then the National Archives and Records Service, at the time a bureau of GSA.²¹ In order for the home to be operated as a historic site for the public benefit, it needed to come under the administration of the National Park Service, which does provide care and interpretation for historic homes.²²

The first step in this process came from the Department of the Interior. On December 8, 1982, Secretary of the Interior James G. Watt, signed an order that designated the Truman's home as the Harry S Truman National Historic Site. Watt had the authority to take this action under the Historic Sites Act of 1935 (49 Stat. 666; 16 U.S.C. 461-467). Section 2 of the Historic Sites Act authorized the Secretary of the Interior, through NPS, to, among other things, identify and acquire for the United States buildings and archeological sites that "possess exceptional value as commemorating or illustrating the history of the United States," and operate and manage these buildings and sites for the public benefit. The Historic Sites Act also authorized the Secretary of the Interior to acquire real property in the name of the United States. The Historic Sites Act stipulated, however, that no monies could be expended until Congress appropriated the necessary funds.

In the 1982 Secretarial Order that designated the Harry S Truman NHS, Secretary Watt noted that, for the present, the home remained in the hands of the Estate of Bess Wallace Truman. The Order then called for the Secretary of the Interior to enter into a cooperative agreement with the Estate of Bess Wallace Truman that would allow the federal government to protect the home until it came into federal ownership. This cooperative agreement would allow NPS to take on responsibility for security of the Truman home until Congress appropriated the funds to develop it as an NHS.

With Mrs. Truman's death, the property no longer was subject to protection by the Secret Service, and both local and NPS officials were concerned for the safety and security of the home and its contents, which also had been willed to the "people of the

²⁰ A copy of Bess Wallace Truman's will, with the codicil, can be found in Appendix E of Ron Cockrell, *The Trumans of Independence: Historic Resource Study, Harry S Truman National Historic Site, Independence, Missouri* (Omaha, NE: Midwest Regional Office, National Park Service, 1985), 429-32, and in the files of Harry S Truman NHS.

²¹ The National Archives and Records Service was designated a bureau of GSA in 1949; in 1985, Congress created the National Archives and Records Administration as an independent federal agency.

²² As discussed in Chapter 3, NPS staff at the Midwest Regional Office [MWRO] in Omaha, Nebraska were aware that the Truman Home would come to NPS, and began planning immediately after Mrs. Truman's death.

United States.” The house was vacant of residents following Mrs. Truman’s death in October, and was, therefore, without protection for nearly two months before it was declared a National Historic Site. This raised a great deal of concern, with charges from the local community and others in Congress and in the national press that NPS was “foot-dragging.” According to an NPS spokesman, at the time, Watt, “had not been aware of the lack of security at the site” until a hearing before the House Interior subcommittee on public lands, which was then considering an initial bill to accept the Truman’s home as a National Historic Site, revealed this deficiency.²³ Once Watt had designated the home as a National Historic Site, NPS worked quickly to develop the Cooperative Agreement, which was executed on December 17, 1982. The Cooperative Agreement re-stated the intent of Mrs. Truman in her will that the home where she, her husband, and her daughter had lived would be a historic site for the public benefit. Moreover, the Cooperative Agreement noted that the Estate of Bess Wallace Truman agreed that the new Harry S Truman National Historic Site would be administered by NPS, and that the Estate would not make any changes to the home or the grounds while the Cooperative Agreement was in place. For its part, the Department of the Interior, through NPS, agreed to administer and protect the home, and begin planning and executing measures for its preservation, interpretation, and use as a National Historic Site. Perhaps most importantly for the safety of the home, the General Services Administration began providing 24-hour protection for the home on December 21, 1982.²⁴

Although the new security for the home was a welcomed relief, the planning efforts to develop the NHS as defined in the Cooperative Agreement were dependent on Congressional action to appropriate the necessary funds. This presented a potential problem in the early 1980s. Ronald Reagan had been elected president in 1980, in part on a platform of restricting the growth of the federal government, if not actually reducing its size. This goal proved impossible to achieve, and the size of the federal government continued to grow throughout President Reagan’s two terms in office. The need to show fiscal restraint on the part of the federal government, however, was endemic throughout Reagan’s administration, particularly in the early years of his first term. One of the key flashpoints in the public’s concern over the expanse of the federal government was land policy, and the Department of the Interior, under Secretary James G. Watt, was at the center of a movement to restrict the government’s acquisition of land. Watt gladly took on the task of restricting the growth of national parks and the acquisition of federal lands.

The staff of the House Subcommittee on Public Lands and National Parks began a study of the federal government’s land acquisition policy for NPS in 1983, releasing the report in the summer of 1984.²⁵ As the report noted, Secretary Watt began in 1981 an attempt “to curtail park acquisition,” proposing a moratorium on park purchases. Congress rejected the moratorium, but, nonetheless, the Department of the Interior

²³ “Truman Home Shifts to Park Service Hands,” *Omaha World-Herald*, December 9, 1982. Clipping in files of Harry S Truman NHS.

²⁴ G. Ray Arnett, Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife and Parks, DOI, to Rep. Kurt D. Zwinkl, January 20, 1983; files of Harry S Truman NHS.

²⁵ “Land Acquisition Policy and Program of the National Park Service,” House of Representatives, Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs, Committee Print No 7, 98th Congress, 2nd Session.

“withdrew the National Park Service’s authority to approve land purchases, initiated new policies and requirements for land protection plans that would deemphasize fee acquisition, and greatly increased the number of procedural reviews for acquiring parkland.”²⁶

Discussions regarding an appropriation for establishing the Harry S Truman NHS took place within this environment of restricted funding for new NPS units. Given this situation, however, and despite concerns at the time over perceived delays, deliberations over the Trumans’ home as a new NHS proceeded relatively quickly. Secretary Watt initially suggested that an amendment to the Department of the Interior’s appropriation bill, currently before the Senate, be adopted to provide the funds.²⁷ Watt had become a lightning rod for attacks, but they were attacks which he largely drew to himself through his public statements. In subsequent discussions of delays regarding the Truman Home, however, Watt’s staff spoke of his desire to add the Truman NHS to the National Park System, but insisted that the confusion over the donation of the house to the National Archives rather than to NPS led to the delays.²⁸

Despite, or, perhaps, because of, Watt’s reputation for delaying action on new national parks, Congress began work on original legislation for Harry S Truman’s home in early December 1982. As the Department of the Interior was working on designating the Truman’s home as a National Historic Site, Rep. Ike Skelton (D-MO) introduced a bill in the House of Representatives on December 3, 1982. As introduced by Rep. Skelton, the bill authorized the Secretary of the Interior to acquire the former home of Harry S Truman in order to establish the NHS, and to allow Margaret Truman Daniel access to portions of the site for her use; it also authorized the appropriation of funds for the new NHS. The bill was assigned to the House Interior and Insular Affairs Committee, but was never reported out and died before it came to a vote. A companion bill in the Senate, however, was introduced by Thomas Eagleton (D-MO) on December 6, 1982, and was co-sponsored by John Danforth (R-MO). This Senate version, identical to the House version, was referred to the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee. The Senate bill passed the Committee, and was then passed by a voice vote in the full Senate on December 21, 1982.

Because the House version did not pass, however, the bill had to be reintroduced the next year, in the 98th Congress. On January 31, 1983, Senator Eagleton reintroduced the bill as S. 287, which was referred again to the Energy and Natural Resources Committee. Action in the Senate committee was delayed, though, as the House bill was considered. Representative Skelton again introduced the House bill as H.R. 1304, on February 7, 1983. The House bill was co-sponsored by nearly all of the Missouri Congressional delegation, and was referred again to the House Interior and Insular Affairs Committee. A week later, the bill was referred to the Subcommittee on Public Lands and National Parks, with subcommittee hearings beginning on February 15, 1983.

²⁶ Ibid., 2.

²⁷ Press Release, issued by Washington Office of NPS, December 9, 1982; NPS Midwest Region Cultural Resources Archive, Omaha, NE, K3417 (MWR-DP).

²⁸ “Of Watt and Truman,” *New York Times*, June 23, 1983; clipping in files of Harry S Truman NHS.

At the same time, Rep. John Seiberling (D-OH) introduced H.R. 1213, the Public Lands and National Parks Act of 1983, on February 2, 1983. Originally introduced during the previous Congressional session, this sprawling omnibus parks bill was designed to exchange certain park lands, increase appropriations for a number of existing National Monuments and National Seashores, among several other provisions. The bill had been passed by the House in the previous Congressional session, but the Senate had not acted on it. After its re-introduction in the House in February 1983, the omnibus bill went to the subcommittee on Public Lands and National Parks, where it was amended at the request of the Administration to include, among other things, establishment of the Harry S Truman NHS. Skelton, who had initially proposed separate legislation to establish the Harry S Truman NHS, rose in the House in support of the omnibus bill. “The house, carriage house, and grounds are a most fitting memorial to Missouri’s finest citizens, Harry and Bess Truman,” Skelton observed. He went on to say that, despite being the president of the United States, Truman and his wife “never forgot the importance of home and community. That is why,” he continued, “this legislation is so important to all of us. It is a most accurate reflection of the values and motivations of our beloved President Truman and of what he hoped for his fellow Americans: A simple and serene life, and the strength that one can find through his community.”²⁹ According to the House Report to accompany H.R. 1213, the Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs approved the inclusion of the Harry S Truman NHS, and had no qualms about the provisions for Margaret Truman Daniel.³⁰

The bill, as amended, passed in the House of Representatives on March 8, 1983. Once the bill began to move forward in the House of Representatives, the Senate began work on a companion bill. The Energy and Natural Resources Committee requested comment from the Department of the Interior on March 2, 1983, and then sent the Senate bill to the Subcommittee on Public Lands and Reserved Water for hearings that included testimony on multiple bills. Subcommittee hearings were held on April 7, 1983, and Senator Eagleton spoke briefly, but eloquently, in favor of the inclusion of the Truman’s home. “Home for the Trumans,” he observed, “was always the Victorian-style white frame house at 219 North Delaware Street, which had been in Mrs. Truman’s family since the middle 1800s. The house stands today as if Harry just went out for an afternoon walk. His hat still hangs under the staircase.” When discussing the significance of the house and the importance of preserving it, he noted that a large cache of some 1,300 letters had already been discovered in the home, many of them between Harry and Bess Truman, and some of them providing new insights into Truman’s foreign policy decisions. “I feel it is important,” he concluded, “that Congress give the Truman home the proper respect it deserves by officially designating the site, and providing generations

²⁹ Rep. Skelton’s comments are recorded in *Congressional Record-House*, H911, March 8, 1983.

Photocopy in files of Harry S Truman NHS. Rep. Alan Wheat (D-MO) also spoke in favor of the bill.

³⁰ House Report 15, 98th Congress, 1st Session, March 2, 1983.

to come an opportunity to glimpse one of America's greatest heroes at his best—at home in Independence.”³¹

National Park Service Deputy Director Mary Lou Grier, also testified on behalf of the proposed legislation. The National Park Service fully supported the plan, she noted, particularly as Secretary Watt had already declared the home a National Historic Site the previous December. In addition, the National Park System already contained twenty-seven presidential residences, and the Truman home “is an outstanding reflection of the man.” The National Park Service, she stated, had already begun a preliminary assessment of the costs for rehabilitation, including completely replacing the electric wiring along with a number of other short- and long-range maintenance needs. She also provided a summary of the conditions in Mrs. Truman's will, including the provisions for her daughter, Margaret Truman Daniel, and concluded that NPS would have no problem with including those conditions in their development of the NHS.³² After her testimony, the members of the Subcommittee had no questions for her regarding the Harry S Truman NHS.

The Senate subcommittee voted in favor of the designation and referred it back to the Energy and Natural Resources Committee. Once there, however, the House omnibus bill was delayed when the committee began considering natural gas legislation instead. In the meantime, the Senate took up Sen. Eagleton's original bill, S. 287, which, like Rep. Skelton's original bill in the House, included only the establishment of the Harry S Truman NHS. The Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources voted unanimously to discharge the bill, sending it to the floor of the Senate on May 5, 1983. The full Senate passed the bill by voice vote on May 6, and referred it back to the House Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs. The House committee discharged the bill by unanimous consent on May 10 and sent it to the full House on the same day, which passed it by voice vote. The bill was then passed in the Senate on May 11, and sent to President Reagan for signature. The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) again requested input from the Department of the Interior, which, in turn, offered full support for the legislation and encouraged the President to sign it.³³ Reagan held the bill for nearly two weeks before signing it on May 23, 1983 as Public Law (P.L.) 98-32, “An Act to establish the Harry S Truman National Historic Site in the State of Missouri, and for other purposes.”

Later that year, in November 1983, Congress passed additional legislation pertaining to the Truman Home. Donald Chisholm, an attorney representing the Estate of Bess Wallace Truman, claimed that the Estate had born a number of expenses for security and upkeep from the time of Bess' death in October through late December, when the

³¹ Testimony of Sen. Tom Eagleton in Senate Hearing 203, 98th Congress, 1st Session, Hearing before the Subcommittee on Public Lands and Reserved Waters of the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, April 7, 1983, 33-34.

³² Statement of Mary Lou Grier, Deputy Director, NPS before the Subcommittee on Public Lands and Reserved Water, Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, on H.R. 1213 and S. 287, April 7, 1983. Typescript MS in files of Harry S Truman NHS.

³³ J.J. Simmons, III, Under Secretary of Department of Interior to David A. Stockman, OMB, may 13, 1983. Typescript MS in files of Harry S Truman NHS.

GSA began providing full-time security, and he requested reimbursement. Chisholm had approached Sen. Tom Eagleton and Rep. Ike Skelton about the reimbursement, totaling \$8000, which was added to the bill in the Senate, and was quickly approved in the House of Representatives. The provision was included with several other Department of the Interior issues in a \$303 million supplemental appropriations bill, the Domestic Housing and International Recovery and Financial Stability Act, as P.L. 98-181. This legislation, including the provisions for the Estate of Bess Wallace Truman, was signed by President Ronald Reagan on November 30, 1983.³⁴

In these discussions of the early establishment of the NHS, a point of punctuation arose that continues to provide some confusion and editorial concerns. As noted in Chapter 1, Mr. Truman's middle initial did not stand for any name in particular. When his parents named him, they included the S, but suggested that it could refer to one of two family names. Throughout his public career, Mr. Truman never provided definitive guidance regarding the use of the period after his middle initial; he mentioned to newspapermen in 1962 that it ought not to be used, but he frequently used it in his books, and there are examples of his signature both with and without the use of the period.

When the Harry S Truman Library was created in 1957, the staff of the National Archives instituted a policy of using the period after Truman's middle initial. The earliest written record from NPS, however, does not use the period. The Order from the Secretary of the Interior designating the Trumans' house an NHS does not use the period, and the enabling legislation for the NHS, signed on May 23, 1983, is titled "An Act to Establish the Harry S Truman National Historic Site in the State of Missouri." This has caused a degree of confusion between NPS and the Truman Library. In early 1983, the Director of the Truman Library, Benedict Zobrist, wrote to F. A. "Andy" Ketterson, Jr., NPS Midwest Regional Office cultural resources management chief, who coordinated much of the early work to establish the NHS. In a hand-written note to Ketterson, Zobrist encouraged NPS to take up the use of the period in Truman's name. "Personally," he said, "I feel strongly that we'll need to stand together on this matter or we are going to have mass confusion."³⁵ Ketterson agreed, and included the period when he prepared the draft legislation to establish the historic site. However, the period was removed from the draft legislation during its review in the Washington Office of NPS, and the legislation as passed by Congress did not include the period.³⁶

As a result of the legislation, and despite Zobrist's plea, NPS has continued to employ this usage, without the period after Truman's middle initial, in all of its correspondence and subsequent legislation. Margaret Truman Daniel, the president's daughter, originally had not used the period but, by the 1980s, suggested that it should be used. Rep. Alan Wheat (D-MO) proposed legislation in 1985 that would add the period to the official name of the historic site. In a letter to Rep. Wheat, the Superintendent of the

³⁴ "U.S. to repay costs for Truman House," *The Examiner* (Independence, MO), November 17, 1983, 1. Clipping in files of Harry S Truman NHS.

³⁵ Benedict Zobrist, Truman Library to Andy Ketterson, January 13, 1983. Handwritten note in files of Harry S Truman NHS.

³⁶ Recollections from Tom Richter to MWRO staff, 2016.

Harry S Truman NHS noted that NPS had no official position on the issue, “and would support any legislation you would choose to introduce concerning this matter. While there is some disagreement as to the usage of punctuation after the S, a period in the title of the historic site would provide unification of usage with our cooperating agency the Truman Library and would bring us in line with the preferred usage of President Trumans [sic] family.”³⁷ Nothing came of this proposed legislation, however, and the lack of a period has continued to the present with respect to sites administered by NPS.

NHS Expansion: 1989

The Harry S Truman National Historic Site has been expanded several times since its original designation in 1982 and establishment by Congress in 1983. It was already recognized that Harry Truman’s story was closely tied to the network of friends and family within Independence and that the home where he and Bess lived with their daughter, Margaret, was just one part of this network. The initial designation of an NHL Historic District in 1971 was the first sign that a proper interpretation of Harry S Truman required more than just one home, as important as that home was. The Truman’s home at 219 North Delaware Street is, indeed, surrounded by the homes of other family members that remain vital to understanding Truman fully in his local context.

The possibility of including more buildings in the NHS surfaced in 1986, when NPS released a draft of the first General Management Plan (GMP) for the NHS. The GMP noted the importance of three homes in particular: the two bungalows facing West Truman Road that belonged to Bess Truman’s two brothers; and the Noland Home, which belonged to Harry Truman’s aunt and uncle and lay directly across North Delaware Street. All three houses were important places in the lives of the Trumans as they grew up, courted, and lived out their adult lives.

In May 1988, Rep. Alan Wheat, whose district included Independence, first approached NPS Director William Penn Mott, Jr. regarding legislation to expand the NHS. Wheat asked for the assistance of NPS in drafting legislation that would add what was then called the Noland/Haukenberry House at 216 North Delaware Street, the Frank Wallace Home at 601 West Truman Road, and the George Wallace House at 605 West Truman Road to the NHS. Drawing from the recommendations in the final GMP as released in 1987, Wheat acknowledged that the three houses should be acquired in fee, with life estates offered to the present owners, and with the plan that each would be adaptively reused for visitor support and park operations.³⁸ At the same time, in response to her request for information, Wheat also coordinated with the Mayor of Independence,

³⁷ Draft letter, Norman Reigle, Harry S Truman NHS to Rep. Alan Wheat, June 4, 1985.

³⁸ Rep. Alan Wheat to William Penn Mott Jr., NPS, May 12, 1988. Typescript MS in files of Harry S Truman NHS.

Barbara Potts.³⁹ The Independence City Council voted on November 7, 1988, to endorse the plan to expand the Harry S Truman NHS by acquiring the three neighboring houses.⁴⁰

Wheat first introduced legislation to expand the NHS as H.R. 5494, co-sponsored by Rep. Skelton, on October 7, 1988. The bill provided for the acquisition in fee simple ownership of the three buildings adjacent to the Truman Home, allowing for a life occupancy of the current owners, and allocated up to \$250,000 to acquire the three buildings. It was referred immediately to the House Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs and then, on November 3, to the Subcommittee on National Parks and Public Lands. This first bill, however, was not reported out of committee before the end of the Congressional session, and the bill died. Rep. Wheat introduced the bill again on January 3, 1989, as H.R. 419, this time with thirty-eight co-sponsors. As before, the bill was referred to the House Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs and then, on February 9, 1989, to the Subcommittee on National Parks and Public Lands.

This subcommittee held hearings on March 14, 1989, led by Chairman Bruce Vento (D-MN). The documentation that was prepared for submission to the hearing referenced the GMP and the favorable public comments on the plan to include the three neighboring houses in the NHS. The Subcommittee then heard testimony from Rep. Wheat, Rep. Skelton, NPS Director Mott, and William Liensch, then Director of Federal Activities for the National Parks and Conservation Association. In his testimony in support of the proposal to acquire the three buildings, Mott noted that the bill called for the acquisition of all three houses in fee simple ownership, but that NPS was not convinced that fee simple acquisition was required, or appropriate, for all three houses. He recommended that the bill be amended to allow for the acquisition of conservation easements as well as fee simple acquisition. "Acquisition of protective easements," he argued, "would be adequate to ensure preservation of the historic setting of the Truman home. Moreover, no more than one house need be acquired in fee simple ownership to meet visitor and administrative needs at the national historic site." His plan was to repair and adapt the Noland Home to allow for public access, which would allow NPS to "improve visitor information and services." According to Mott, the Noland home likely would be acquired in fee simple ownership, but the two Wallace homes likely would not be.⁴¹

The report of the subcommittee acknowledged Mott's suggestion regarding the provision for less-than-fee simple acquisition, but decided to reject it. Their reason was the perceived threat to the neighborhood posed by increasing development pressures in the City of Independence. "These changes," the report claimed, "and possibly future impacts make vital the need for the continued commitment and support by the city and others to the preservation of the overall historic setting of the neighborhood." The

³⁹ Rep. Alan Wheat to Barbara Potts, May 24, 1988. Typescript MS in files of Harry S Truman NHS.

⁴⁰ Independence, City Council, Resolution No. 31110, November 7, 1988. Typescript MS in files of Harry S Truman NHS.

⁴¹ Subcommittee on National Parks and Public Lands of the Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs, Hearing on H.R. 419, March 14, 1989. 101st Congress, 1st session. Typescript MS in files of Harry S Truman NHS.

National Park Service should do its part in the long-term protection of the neighborhood, according to the subcommittee report. The three buildings were in close proximity to the Truman home, the report noted, and were important to the protection of the home's historic setting. With this physical proximity, "as well as their relatively modest cost, the Committee believes that acquisition of the three homes, in fee, is a more appropriate management policy."⁴²

The subcommittee reported favorably on the bill and forwarded it to the full Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs without the recommendation to allow less-than-fee acquisition. The Committee then reported the bill, with the subcommittee report, to the full House. The bill passed in the House on a voice vote on April 11, 1989, and was then forwarded to the Senate for deliberation on April 13, 1989. The Senate referred the bill to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, which, in turn, referred it to the Subcommittee on Public Lands, National Parks and Forests. Progress on the bill slowed in the Senate, but the subcommittee finally held hearings on the bill on July 19, 1989. In these hearings, NPS Associate Director for Planning and Development Gerald Patten repeated the opinion that Mott had expressed at the House subcommittee hearing that fee simple acquisition may not be required, and he recommended that the bill include a provision for less-than-fee simple acquisition. According to Patten only one building, the Noland Home, might require fee simple acquisition "to meet visitor and administrative needs at the national historic site."⁴³

Like the House subcommittee, however, the Senate subcommittee reported favorably on the bill without this amendment. The subcommittee report noted that acquisition of the three houses was supported by the Truman family, and was "considered necessary to preserve the site from increased development pressures near the National Historic Site boundary resulting from the rapid growth of the city [sic] of Independence."⁴⁴ The Committee on Energy and Natural Resources then reported the bill favorably, without amendment. The end of summer led to delays in the full Senate vote, but it was placed on the agenda in September. The bill passed in the Senate on September 12, 1989, without amendment, by voice vote, and was sent to President George H. W. Bush on September 21, 1989. President Bush signed the bill into law on October 2, 1989, including provisions for fee simple acquisition of all three houses.

In accordance with P.L. 101-105, NPS was authorized to acquire three specific properties: Noland/Haukenberry House and associated lands on Delaware Street, Frank G. Wallace House and associated lands, and George P. Wallace House and associated lands, both on Truman Road. Paragraph (2) of the act allows that the owners of the three homes may, "as a condition to such acquisition, retain the right of use and occupancy of the improved property for a term of up to 25 years or, in lieu thereof, for a term ending at the death of the owner or the spouse of the owner, whichever is later." This paragraph left the decision of a life occupancy up to the owner of the home. Under Paragraph (3) of the

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ Report of the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources to accompany H.R. 419, S. Rpt. 114, 101st Congress, 1st Session, August 30, 1989.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

act, “Unless a property acquired pursuant to this subsection is wholly or partially donated to the United States, the Secretary shall pay the owner the fair market value of the property on the date of acquisition less the fair market value, on that date, of the right retained by the owner under paragraph (2).” Finally, the act authorized \$250,000 to acquire the three homes at fair market value.

Each of the three homes was purchased soon after the passage of the act, as described in greater detail in Chapter 6. The Frank Wallace Home was the first of the three to be acquired, with the sale closing on October 15, 1990 for a purchase price of \$54,000. Park staff actually took possession of the Frank Wallace Home in February 1991. Both the George Wallace Home and the Noland Home took longer to secure since both homes were purchased through a condemnation proceeding which allowed for more flexibility with the purchase price: the U.S. District Court for the Western District of Missouri stipulated the purchase of both homes, in separate actions, in July 1991 with the sale of each home closing in September 1991. The George Wallace Home was acquired for a purchase price of \$60,000, while the Noland Home was acquired for a purchase price of \$47,000. Chief of Maintenance Michele Cefola and Chief of Cultural Resources Carol Dage performed the preliminary inspections of each of the homes at the time that it was first accessed.

Inclusion of Truman Farm Home in Grandview, Missouri

The importance of the farm in Grandview, Missouri, where Harry Truman lived and worked from 1906 until he enlisted in the Army in 1917, had long been understood. His maternal grandparents, Solomon and Harriet Young, purchased the property in several parcels between the 1840s and the early 1860s. Harry’s father, John Truman, married the Young’s daughter, Martha, in 1881, and the couple lived at the farm after they were married, and again shortly before moving to Independence in 1890 when Harry was six years old. His parents returned to the Grandview farm in 1902, and Harry also moved there in 1906 at the request of his parents, who needed help with the farm work. Harry worked for eleven years at the Grandview farm, the last three of which he was the farm’s sole manager after his father died in 1914. This experience gave him a solid grounding in agricultural concerns that proved useful throughout his civic and political career. That the Grandview farm was vital in understanding Harry S Truman had been without question; the question through the 1970s and 1980 was whether to acquire it and how to manage it.

Truman’s family, particularly his mother, Martha Ellen Young Truman, continued to own and live at the farm into the 1940s, although legal contests among the heirs of Truman’s grandmother placed a great financial burden on the family. In the late 1930s Truman’s mother was forced to mortgage the farm to the Jackson County School District; when the county government shifted from control by the Democrats to the Republicans in 1940, Truman’s political opponents seized on the opportunity and foreclosed on the farm, forcing his mother and sister to move to a small bungalow in Grandview. With the support of friends of the family, Harry Truman’s brother Vivian, who had purchased a

farm next door in 1911, was able to purchase the family's farm home and 87 acres in 1945; friends of the family then purchased the remaining 200 acres so that the family could acquire the parcel later. Harry Truman then purchased the land from the group in 1946.⁴⁵ Truman's elderly mother and his sister did not move back to the farm. Vivian Truman took over responsibility for the farm in 1945, assisted by his sons Harry and Gilbert. Harry Truman remained involved with the affairs of the farm during his time in Washington, D.C., and after he retired from public office. During that time, however, through the 1950s and early 1960s, as the area became more attractive for commercial development, both he and his family regularly sold parcels for commercial development to meet other financial concerns. The principal commercial development of the former Truman Farm land was the Truman Corners Shopping Center, a large development along a frontage road that paralleled U.S. Highway 71 beginning at the Blue Ridge Boulevard exit. By the mid-1960s, the farm had dwindled from approximately 600 acres to a little more than five acres, set back from the main road but surrounded by commercial buildings. Harry S Truman sold his interest in the farm and home to his nephews Harry and Gilbert in 1965.

Local efforts to protect what remained of the Truman's farm began in 1965 following the death of Harry Truman's brother, Vivian. Vivian's sons were interested in selling it to someone who would preserve it for historical purposes. A local group that included Philip Brooks, Director of the Truman Library, and Judge Floyd Snyder of the Jackson County Court approached NPS about taking on the project, but were refused as Truman had instructed NPS that he wanted nothing done to commemorate him while he was alive. Vivian's sons then rented the farm house, but did no maintenance on the building, and the issue of its preservation was dropped. In the mid-1970s, another local group formed to try to raise money to purchase the home; they did not raise enough money for the purchase, but they did secure its listing on the National Register of Historic Places in 1978. A second attempt to raise the funds began after that. The Truman Farm Home Foundation was created in 1980 with the goal of acquiring and restoring the home. Jackson County supported a successful grant application in 1980 for the Department of the Interior's Land and Water Conservation Fund through the Missouri Department of Natural Resources to purchase the property which included 5.2 acres. The Foundation restored the home "back to its original appearance" in time for a dedication in May 1984, and acquired furnishings for the interior, although none of the furnishings were original to the home or to the Trumans.⁴⁶ The Harry S Truman Farm Home NHL nomination, with the historic name Solomon Young Farm, was prepared by NPS MWRO Regional Historian Jill York and submitted on April 23, 1984. The nomination went forward to the Landmarks Committee of the National Park System Advisory Board and then to the full Advisory Board for recommendation. Secretary of the Interior William P. Clark authorized NHL status for the Harry S Truman Farm Home on April 4, 1985. By the fall of 1986, the Truman Farm Home Foundation found itself unable to pay its bills, including interest on a \$17,500 loan from Grandview Bank and liability insurance premiums, with

⁴⁵ Jill M. York, National Register of Historic Places/National Historic Landmark Nomination, April 23, 1984.

⁴⁶ Project Management Information System (PMIS) Form, "Preservation and Restoration of Historic Truman Farm Structures," PMIS No. 62949, August 8, 2003; files of Harry S Truman NHS.

only \$550.00 in the bank. The Foundation reached out to Jackson County to take over the site, which the County agreed to do on condition that the Foundation remain functioning in order to raise funds to pay the debt.⁴⁷ Using volunteer help, the Jackson County Parks and Recreation Department then operated the home on a part-time basis as a house museum.⁴⁸

In the Spring of 1989, officials with Jackson County contacted Rep. Alan Wheat regarding the Truman Farm Home and requested his assistance in seeking support from NPS in operation of the site. Wheat then wrote to NPS Director James Ridenour, referencing the recent expansion of the NHS to include the three houses that adjoined the Truman Home in Independence in his request for assistance. The report of subcommittee hearings from that legislative process had included a strong recommendation that NPS conduct a study of the Truman Farm in Grandview “to assess the possibilities for enhanced interpretation and education of Truman’s life and times and prepare a report on management options to achieve such purposes.” Wheat asked that Ridenour begin that study process.⁴⁹

The National Park Service Midwest Regional Office (MWRO) was assigned the lead to develop this study. In a briefing report for MWRO Regional Director Dan Castleberry in September 1989, Harry S Truman NHS Superintendent Norman J. “Norm” Reigle noted that Jackson County Parks and Recreation Department was in fiscal crisis and anticipated shutting down several parks. As a result, he said, the County had approached Rep. Wheat and Senators John Danforth (R-MO) and Christopher Bond (R-MO) about adding the farm home to the National Park System.⁵⁰ Acting Midwest Regional Director William Schenk responded to a request from Sen. Bond in early August 1989, treading cautiously regarding taking the Truman Farm Home into the existing Harry S Truman NHS. Funds are limited, Schenk explained, for taking on responsibility for managing the Farm Home or even for carrying out a feasibility study. “Nevertheless,” Schenk concluded, “since this site is already a designated national historic landmark and directly related to an existing unit of the National Park System, we are making plans to prepare a brief report on the farm home’s interpretive potential.”⁵¹

In the summer of 1990, MWRO released a preliminary study that included a range of possible management options for the Grandview farm. In addition to the “No Action” alternative, a standard feature of most such studies, which was to have the Jackson County Parks and Recreation Department continue to have full responsibility for the site,

⁴⁷ Memorandum, Susan Burton, Jackson County Parks and Recreation to Leon Younger and Dennis Taylor, October 13, 1986; files of Harry S Truman NHS.

⁴⁸ Alternatives for Management of the Truman Farm, Grandview, Missouri. Draft Report. National Park Service, Midwest Region, August 1990; files of Harry S Truman NHS. A more concise summary of the Truman Farm Home’s development is included in Report of the Committee on Natural Resources to Accompany H.R. 486, November 20, 1993, H.Rpt. 399, 103rd Congress, 1st Session. See also Rep. Alan Wheat to James Ridenour, Director, NPS, June 8, 1989; files of Harry S Truman NHS.

⁴⁹ Rep. Alan Wheat to James Ridenour, Director, NPS, June 8, 1989. Typescript MS in files of Harry S Truman NHS. Quote from H. Rpt. 101-19, April 10, 1989.

⁵⁰ Briefing Statement, for Regional Director Castleberry, September 27, 1989.

⁵¹ William Schenk, MWRO-NPS to Sen. Christopher Bond, August 4, 1989.

the alternatives included having the Truman Farm as an affiliated NPS site though still owned by Jackson County; federal ownership as part of NPS but still managed by Jackson County; Congressional authorization to add the Truman Farm Home to the existing NHS; and the authorization of the Farm Home as a Missouri State Historic Site. In addition, MWRO considered the possibility of Congressional authorization of the Truman Farm Home as a separate unit of the National Park System, but rejected it. It was not considered a practical alternative given the close proximity of the existing Harry S Truman NHS. “To create a separate unit at Grandview,” the report concluded, “would involve considerable duplication of staff, development, and other related costs.” The Midwest Regional Office assessed each option with regard to meeting very basic criteria of management, but offered no recommendations.⁵²

Occasional studies continued for the next year and more regarding the possibility of providing for the interpretation of the Truman Farm Home in Grandview. At the same time, Rep. Wheat introduced a bill in the House of Representatives to add the Truman Farm Home to the existing NHS. Wheat introduced the bill, H.R. 3898, on November 22, 1991, which was then referred to the Committee on Interior and Internal Affairs, and then to the Subcommittee on National Parks and Public Lands. The bill was carried over to the following year and was the subject of a hearing before the subcommittee on May 5, 1992.

In preparation for the hearing, Wheat solicited input from MWRO on the status of the NPS evaluation of the site. Harry S Truman NHS Superintendent Ronald Mack, provided an update to MWRO Regional Director Don Castleberry in April 1992. Mack acknowledged that the Truman Farm Home had great interpretive potential but stated that it would be an expensive undertaking. Mack estimated that approximately \$100,000 would be needed initially, as the farm home was in a deteriorating condition and needed stabilization and a structural assessment. If it was acquired by NPS, Mack estimated that it would cost approximately \$350,000 per year to operate, including staffing, preservation, maintenance, vehicles, and miscellaneous supplies, in addition to the initial structural costs. He went on to suggest that an appropriate staffing level would consist of a site manager, two maintenance workers, and both permanent and seasonal interpretive staff.⁵³

Wheat’s bill did not secure the easy passage that the previous Truman-related legislation had enjoyed. The costs anticipated with taking on the Farm Home, along with its condition and the commercial nature of its immediate surroundings, raised many questions among House committee members. The National Park Service Chief Historian Edwin C. “Ed” Bearss spoke of its importance in completing the story of Harry S Truman, but other NPS officials testified in opposition, citing the loss of integrity of the home and its surroundings. In a memorandum, for example, Harry S Truman NHS Superintendent Ron Mack stated bluntly that “The National Park Service opposes legislation to include the Truman Farm Home as part of the Harry S Truman National

⁵² Alternatives for Management of the Truman Farm, Grandview, Missouri. Draft Report. National Park Service, Midwest Region, August 1990. Files of Harry S Truman NHS, 19.

⁵³ Memorandum, Superintendent, Harry S Truman to Regional Director, MWRO, April 24, 1992.

Historic Site.”⁵⁴ While in Committee, an amendment was added to the bill, largely in response to questions about the integrity of the surroundings, to provide technical and planning assistance to local governments for the development of plans for minimizing the adverse effects from surrounding development.⁵⁵ Despite the opposition, the bill was reported favorably by the Committee in July 1992, with the amendment for planning and technical assistance to local governments, and was passed by the House on voice vote. It was sent to the Senate on July 28, 1992, and referred to the committee on Energy and Natural Resources who, in turn, sent it to the Senate Subcommittee on National Parks, Forests and Public Lands. However, the bill never made it out of the subcommittee and died for that session.

Wheat tried again the next year, and introduced H.R. 486 on January 6, 1993. Although he had some support, opposition to the bill continued. In December 1992, Superintendent Mack summarized for MWRO the various positions regarding adding the Truman Farm Home to the Harry S Truman NHS. Margaret Truman Daniel, he noted, joined NPS in opposing the bill, as did the lame-duck Administration of George H.W. Bush. The Friends of the Truman Farm Home supported the bill, as did Jackson County, while Rep. Craig Thomas (R-WY), the Chairman of the House subcommittee on National Parks, Forests, and Public Lands, “reluctantly” opposed the bill based on the lack of funding.⁵⁶

Despite the opposition, Wheat’s bill moved forward through the Subcommittee on National Parks, Forest and Public Lands. After hearings in early March 1993, the House Natural Resources Committee ordered it reported later that month, including the amendment from the previous year that provided for technical assistance to the City of Grandview and Jackson County to assist with implementing plans that would mitigate the loss of integrity in the surrounding area. It was a divided committee, however. The bill was reported from the committee on a vote of 22-17, and suffered a long delay as the report was prepared. The dissenting view of the minority was included in the report from the committee in November 1993, and was blunt in its assessment: “this property simply fails to pass the first test which all properties must pass in order to become eligible for inclusion in the National Park System, and that is the integrity of the site itself.” The subcommittee hearings, the minority report continued, included an extensive discussion that “was focused on trying to identify a current unit of the park system with even less merit and integrity than this one.” The minority report went on to note that NPS had testified that the building, surrounded by commercial development and without original furnishings, would be difficult to interpret to the public. On a more general note, the minority report also expressed concern about the steady erosion of the integrity of existing NPS sites as Congress was eager to add more units to it. Funds were limited, the dissenting report stated, and would be better put to “existing needs at areas already

⁵⁴ Memorandum, Superintendent, Harry S Truman to Regional Director, Midwest Region, September 8, 1992.

⁵⁵ Memorandum, Assistant Director, Legislative and Congressional Affairs to File, July 9, 1992. Typescript MS in files of Harry S Truman NHS. This memorandum also provides a useful summary of comments from the committee hearing.

⁵⁶ Memorandum, Superintendent, Harry S Truman to Regional Director, Midwest Region, December 15, 1992.

included within the park system, rather than diverted to meet the needs of a never-ending list of questionable new proposals.”⁵⁷

In its favorable report, however, the majority emphasized the importance of the Truman Farm Home to understanding President Truman fully. The majority highlighted the testimony of NPS Chief Historian Ed Bearss in which, drawing on arguments made by Regional Historian Jill York in her NHL nomination, he expressed the view that Truman’s years on the farm were integral to his development: “The Committee believes the Truman Farm Home would provide an excellent opportunity for the National Park Service to interpret the important farm years of Truman and would complement the Truman related properties owned by the National Park Service in Independence.” Jackson County was willing to donate the buildings and the surrounding lands, the report noted, and no additional visitor facilities would be needed. In addition, the City of Grandview had passed a resolution that indicated their willingness to work with NPS on ways to preserve the remaining rural character of the surroundings.⁵⁸

Once reported favorably from the Committee on Natural Resources, the House passed H.R. 486 on November 23, 1993. The bill then went to the Senate, where it was passed the next day. The Senate then forwarded the bill to President Clinton on December 8, who signed it into law on December 14, 1993. On March 21, 1994, the Jackson County Legislature passed a resolution to execute a quit claim deed for the Truman Farm Home to the United States of America as a donation.⁵⁹ The Truman Farm Home, surrounding structures, grounds and building contents were received by the National Park Service from Jackson County Parks and Recreation on May 8, 1994, during a formal ceremony at the farm site in Grandview.

The act was signed as P.L. 103-184, “An Act to provide for the addition of the Truman Farm Home to the Harry S Truman National Historic Site in the State of Missouri.” The act authorized the Secretary of the Interior “to acquire from Jackson County, Missouri, by donation, the real property commonly referred to as the Truman Farm Home located in Grandview, Jackson County, Missouri, together with associated lands and related structures, comprising approximately 5.2 acres.” Finally, the act authorized and directed the Secretary of the Interior “to provide appropriate political subdivisions of the State of Missouri with technical and planning assistance for the development and implementation of plans, programs, regulations, or other means for minimizing the adverse effects on the Truman Farm Home of the development and use of adjacent lands.”

In 2003, Harry S Truman NHS Superintendent James A. Sanders began discussions with the owners of two properties that adjoined the Truman Farm Home property. Both owners indicated their willingness to sell the properties, one of which

⁵⁷ House Report 399, Committee on Natural Resources to accompany H.R. 486, 103rd Congress, 1st Session, November 20, 1993.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

⁵⁹ County Legislature of Jackson County, Missouri, Resolution No. 10242, March 21, 1994. Typescript MS in files of Harry S Truman NHS.

included a building owned by PPG Architectural Finishes, Inc., doing business as PPG Paint Store.⁶⁰ In the 1999 revision of the park's General Management Plan, this building was identified as a potential location for a visitor orientation facility for the Truman Farm. Superintendent Larry Villalva pointed out in a briefing about the two adjoining properties in 2006 that the City of Grandview would also use the facility as an information center, and that "The city has been waiting patiently for 2 years for the acquisition so that they may enter into a joint venture with the NPS in the operation of the visitor center."⁶¹ Proceeding with this land acquisition as an addition to the Harry S Truman NHS required Congressional action, and Sanders coordinated with Rep. Karen McCarthy (D-MO), who had succeeded Alan Wheat in the House of Representatives. Negotiations with the landowners continued through 2003 and early 2004, and, in June 2004, Rep. McCarthy introduced a bill in the House (H.R. 4579) that would authorize NPS to acquire the tracts, totaling approximately five acres. The House Subcommittee on National Parks, Recreation and Public Lands held hearings on the bill on July 15, 1994, and continued discussions through the summer. The full House Committee on Resources met to discuss the bill on September 15, 1994, and reported the bill favorably.

In its report on the bill, the Committee on Resources noted that no appraisal had yet been prepared, but the estimated cost of acquisition was between \$850,000 and \$950,000. Under the bill, NPS would be authorized to acquire approximately five acres adjacent to the south side of the existing Truman Farm Home property, including the former PPG Paint Store, which would be used as a new visitor center. The Congressional Budget Office (CBO) provided an estimate that NPS would require approximately \$2 million over the next three to five years to implement the legislation. Approximately half of this amount would be used to purchase the two tracts. The remaining \$1 million would be used to renovate the existing building for use as a visitor center serving both NPS and the City of Grandview, developing new interpretive materials, and restoring park areas that Jackson County currently was using for visitor services.⁶²

After being reported favorably from the Committee on Resources, the bill went to the full House, where it passed on a voice vote on September 28, 2004. The bill then passed the Senate without debate on October 10, 2004, and was signed by President George W. Bush on October 30, 2004 as P.L. 108-396. Although the purchase of the two adjoining properties was authorized in the fall of 2004, negotiations for the sale continued for several years. However, in 2007, owners of the two properties agreed to donate the land to NPS, and these transactions were completed in 2008.

⁶⁰ James A. Sanders, Harry S Truman NHS to Rep. Karen McCarthy, July 14, 2003. Typescript MS in files of HSTR.

⁶¹ Briefing, Larry Villalva, Harry S Truman NHS, regarding Public Law 108-396 (Truman Farm Home Expansion Act), October 13, 2006; files of Harry S Truman NHS.

⁶² House Report 108-703, to accompany H.R. 4579, Committee on Resources, 108th Congress, 2nd Session, September 28, 2004.

Harry S Truman Birthplace Special Resource Study

Although Harry S Truman is most closely connected with the City of Independence, where he grew up and where he lived for most of his married life, he was born in Lamar, Missouri, a small town approximately 125 miles south of Independence. Truman's father worked as a horse and mule trader in Lamar after leaving his mother's family's farm in Grandview. The site's importance in Truman's life was recognized as early as 1959, when the State of Missouri began operating it as a historic site. Truman himself attended and spoke at the dedication of the house as a State Historic Site in 1959. It was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1969.

In 2009, Congress took up discussion of H.R. 146, the Omnibus Public Land Management Act. It was a sprawling bill that designated a wide range of lands to the National Wilderness Preservation System and included many other provisions for public lands. Title VII of the bill authorized a number of additions to the National Park System and amendments to existing National Park System units, and also authorized Special Resource Studies to determine the eligibility of eleven historic sites for the National Park System. Section 7207 directed the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a Special Resource Study of the Harry S Truman Birthplace to determine its suitability for possible addition to the existing Harry S Truman NHS. Introduced in the House on January 6, 2009, the bill passed rapidly through the House of Representatives and was sent to the Senate on March 4, 2009. Several amendments to the bill were made in the Senate, and the bill passed the Senate by unanimous consent on March 19, 2009. The House of Representatives agreed to the Senate amendments on March 25, 2009, and the bill was signed into law by President Barack Obama on March 30, 2009 as P.L. 111-11.

The Midwest Regional Office coordinated the work for the Special Resource Study beginning in 2009. Chief of Cultural Resources Carol Dage and Chief of Interpretation Mike Ryan, from the Harry S Truman NHS, served as technical advisors to the study. The study found that the birthplace did not meet criteria for inclusion in the National Park System and it was not feasible to add it to the existing park unit. The final report, released in April 2011, recommended that the Harry S Truman Birthplace not be included in the Harry S Truman NHS. Instead, it remains a Missouri State Historic Site.⁶³

⁶³ Harry S Truman Birthplace Special Resource Study, Lamar, Missouri. National Park Service, MWRO, April 2011. A discussion of the Special Resource Study will be included in a subsequent chapter.

Chapter 3: Initial Implementation

As natural as the fit now seems between the National Park Service and Harry and Bess Truman's home in Independence, many uncertainties lingered in the aftermath of Bess Wallace Truman's death on October 18, 1982. The house on North Delaware Street, where she grew up and which she shared with her husband and daughter for more than a half-century, entered a period of limbo. Although she left the home to the United States of America under the care of the Truman Library, the means by which it would be made available to the people of the United States was not clear. The Truman Library, with which the Trumans had a close personal and professional relationship and which received the home under the terms of Mrs. Truman's will, did not operate buildings as historic house museums. This role fell to NPS, which was not part of the Trumans' planning. Chapter 2 outlined the legislative history by which the home first became a National Historic Site on December 8, 1982, and then a unit of the National Park System on May 23, 1983. On December 17, 1982, meanwhile, the federal government (through the Department of the Interior and the General Services Administration) entered into a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with the Estate of Bess Wallace Truman that allowed NPS, rather than the Truman Library, to take responsibility for the home. This, in turn, set the stage for NPS to begin planning for opening the home to the public in May 1984.

The period between NPS accepting responsibility for the Truman Home in December 1982 and its opening in May 1984 was one of intense planning. Challenges from the beginning were legion: the home required extensive maintenance to make it safe for public tours; it contained tens of thousands of artifacts that the Trumans had collected over their long marriage and public life, tucked away in boxes, dressers, and cupboards from the basement to the attic; and there was almost no historical information regarding the manner in which the Trumans lived in the home. With this lack of historical information, and an unclear knowledge of the nature and extent of the artifacts in it, the interpretive program would have to wait for primary research before planning could begin. It was a daunting task to have the home ready for public tours within eighteen months, a challenge made more pressing by a limited staff and continuous budget shortfalls. This period of intense planning and development, however, laid the groundwork for the policies and approaches that continue to inform the staff in its management of the Truman Home. This chapter outlines the initial planning of several key areas in the period leading up to dedication of the Harry S Truman NHS on May 12, 1984.

Agreement Documents

By designating the Truman Library, which was under authority of the General Services Administration (GSA), as the recipient of her home, Bess Truman's will created legal difficulties in operating the home for the public's benefit. In discussions between

NPS staff and Truman Library staff, it was clear that NPS was the agency best able to manage the home as a historic site. NPS could not accept responsibility for the home, however, until the legal title was cleared and resided with NPS. This process could be lengthy, and the house would be without federal protection in the meantime. The solution was to create two separate agreement documents between the Estate of Bess Wallace Truman and the federal government: the first provided a short-term, stopgap authority for basic protection and the second finalized the arrangement once the federal government's title to the property was clear.

The first Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) was developed with remarkable speed. Secretary of the Interior James Watt issued his Order that the home was a National Historic Site on December 8, 1982. Less than ten days later, on December 17, 1982, the MOA was executed by Secretary of the Interior James G. Watt and Administrator of General Services Gerald Carmen for the federal government, and the Senior Vice President of United Missouri Bank of Kansas City, the Executor of the Estate of Bess Wallace Truman. The MOA acknowledged that the United States intended to accept the bequest from Bess Truman, "upon the satisfactory completion of certain legal requirements and formalities." The MOA also made clear the intention of both the federal government and the Estate that the home be administered by NPS, first for the term of the MOA and then, following the conclusion of jurisdictional actions, in perpetuity. Through the MOA, the Estate agreed not to make any changes to the home without NPS approval, while NPS agreed to cooperate with the Estate on planning for the home's protection and interpretation. The General Services Administration, meanwhile, agreed to cooperate with NPS on an inventory of the home "as well as advising on other administrative matters that might involve the Harry S. Truman Library." The term of the MOA, meanwhile, was from immediately upon its execution until title had passed to the United States.

The follow-up MOA was executed on September 14, 1983. In the meantime, Congress passed legislation which authorized funds for creation of the Harry S Truman NHS. This second MOA, which included Margaret Truman Daniel as a signatory in addition to NPS, GSA, and the Estate of Bess Wallace Truman, acknowledged that all were satisfied with NPS's administration of the home and that all wished NPS to continue to administer the home in perpetuity. The MOA formally allowed the Secretary of the Interior to accept title to the home once the Attorney General of the United States approved the title. It also appointed NPS to provide "appropriate operation, maintenance, interpretation, management, and protection of the Harry S. Truman home commensurate with its nationally acclaimed significance." In recognition of the terms of Bess Truman's will, GSA, through the Truman Library, was allowed the opportunity to advise the Secretary of the Interior regarding administration of the home. In correspondence during the preceding summer, attorneys representing the Trumans agreed that the MOA would be effective upon signature, "without the necessity of an order of the probate court ratifying the agreement."⁶⁴

⁶⁴ Memorandum, Director, National Park Service to Secretary, Department of the Interior, July 6, 1983; files of Harry S Truman NHS, Independence, Missouri.

Interim Regional Administration

Given the existing relationship between the Truman family and the Truman Library and the unease which Harry and Bess Truman and their daughter, Margaret Truman Daniel, had regarding allowing the public to access their intensely private space, the speed with which responsibility for the house fell to NPS is surprising. This accelerated pace was made possible by rapid deployment of NPS staff at the Midwest Regional Office (MWRO) in Omaha, who provided administration for the site before dedicated staff were appointed in 1983. Even before the first Cooperative Agreement was discussed, Chief of Cultural Resources F.A. “Andy” Ketterson was tasked with coordinating NPS activities associated with the Truman’s home in anticipation of a potential administrative role (Figure 12). As Senior Historian Ron Cockrell recalled, NPS officials in Omaha were aware even before Mrs. Truman died that the Truman Home likely would come to them, having been alerted by the Truman Library that Mrs. Truman, in her will, would bequeath the home and its contents to the federal government.⁶⁵

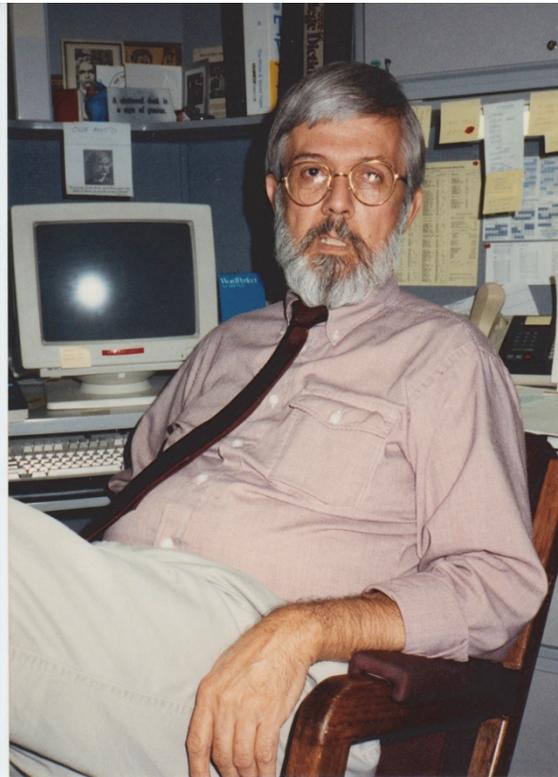


Figure 12. MWRO Chief, Cultural Resources Management, Andy Ketterson, 1991. Photo provided by Harry S Truman NHS.

⁶⁵ Ron Cockrell, oral history interview, December 18, 2015.

In early November 1982, Ketterson held extensive conversations about the Truman Home with local officials including Pat O'Brien, Historic Preservation Officer for the City of Independence; Benedict Zobrist, Director of the Truman Library; Cheryl Brace, Chief of Support Services Branch for the Federal Protective Service (a branch of GSA); Don Chisholm, attorney for the Executor of Bess Truman's Estate; and James Cantrell, Special Agent in Charge at the Secret Service office in Kansas City.⁶⁶ Two issues were key in this whirlwind of telephone calls. The first issue was the need to determine ownership of the Truman's home in light of Bess Truman's will, which bequeathed it to "the United States of America under the direction of the Archivist of The United States in conjunction with the Harry S. Truman Library." Related to this was how the home would be administered in the public's benefit, as required by the will, and by whom. While Zobrist had previously indicated that the Truman Library was not interested in administering the home, the two agencies faced a significant amount of negotiations between them and with Bess Truman's estate. In his conversations with O'Brien, Ketterson received offers of support from the City of Independence should NPS assume administration and interpretation of the home.

The second issue, which was the most pressing, was the immediate need to provide security at the Truman Home. While Bess Truman was alive, the U.S. Secret Service provided for her protection from a house the agency leased at 224 North Delaware Street, across the street from the Truman's home. With her death, two weeks before Ketterson began making his calls, Secret Service protection ended, and their monitoring equipment was immediately removed.⁶⁷ Security for the site was available through GSA's Federal Protection Service, which had an office in Kansas City, but at a charge. Without an agreement between GSA and NPS regarding ownership or responsibility for the home, the charges would not be authorized.⁶⁸ An important component of the question of security was the charm and uniqueness of the Truman's home: based in a walkable neighborhood, it was accessible to curiosity-seekers and vandals alike and was only lightly secured by locks and window closures. In the absence of Secret Service protection, the Estate of Bess Wallace Truman contracted with a private security firm to guard the home.

Ketterson's initial telephone conversations with local representatives were followed by the first NPS visit to the Truman Home a week later, on November 10, 1982. Ketterson traveled to Independence from Omaha and met initially with Independence Historic Preservation Officer Pat O'Brien to discuss potential parking once the house was open to the public. O'Brien also shared with Ketterson results of the city's recent

⁶⁶ Memorandum, Chief, Cultural Resources Management to Director, Midwest Region, November 5, 1982; files of MWRO, File L58. See also handwritten telephone notes, files of Harry S Truman NHS.

⁶⁷ In his oral history interview, Norm Reigle responded to a question about early security measures: "in a nutshell, as I understand it, after Mrs. Truman died, the Secret Service was gone in about twelve hours and there was no protection."

⁶⁸ Ibid.

inspection of the home, which revealed serious problems with the electrical wiring but no substantial structural issues.⁶⁹

This initial meeting in Independence was followed by a tour of the Truman Home with Don Chisholm, Stephen Campbell (counsel for United Missouri Bank of Kansas City, the Executor of Bess Truman's estate), Benedict Zobrist, and Pat Kerr, a Truman Library staff member who had earlier compiled a partial inventory of the home. On this first visit to the Truman's home, Ketterson observed that it "is completely furnished and the general appearance is that the family just walked out the door." Ketterson also noted that the home needed extensive rewiring, a new roof, and minor exterior repairs. Following the tour, Ketterson met with Zobrist and Kerr at the Truman Library, laying the groundwork for a fruitful collaboration between NPS and the Truman Library in administration of the home and its contents. Unlike NPS staff, who were new on the scene, those from the Truman Library had developed a relationship with Margaret Truman Daniel. In particular, Kerr had spent extensive time in the house in 1981, preparing an inventory at the request of Mrs. Daniel. Zobrist declared that "he had no interest in operating the Truman home," and pledged full support for NPS in their efforts to preserve and interpret it.⁷⁰ He suggested a number of individuals "who could be of assistance in planning for the maintenance and interpretation of the home." During the meeting, Zobrist also suggested that May 1984, the centennial of Harry S Truman's birth, would be an appropriate target for at least a partial opening of the home to the public.⁷¹

As described in Chapter 2, Secretary Watt issued his Order which named the Truman Home a NHS less than a month after this initial series of meetings, and negotiations over the first MOA proceeded quickly. This MOA was executed less than two weeks after the Order. Ketterson at once moved to negotiate a security presence through GSA's Federal Protective Service, which was put in place on December 21, 1982.⁷² Several days earlier, on December 16, 1982, NPS Assistant Director for Financial Management and Data Dan Salisbury called Regional Director J.L. Dunning in Omaha requesting that MWRO find the funds to cover the cost of Federal Protection Service officers within the Region until more formal arrangements could be made. This likely would last until the second MOA was signed, according to Salisbury, though the contract that was negotiated came to a close on March 31, 1983.⁷³ Under the terms of the arrangement with Federal Protective Services, security guards provided hourly inspections of the interior and exterior of the home, around the clock.

⁶⁹ Ketterson provided a thorough summary of his meetings in Independence on November 10: Memorandum, Chief, Cultural Resources Management to Associate Regional Director, Planning and Resource Protection, November 16, 1982; files of MWRO, file 58-Gen.

⁷⁰ According to Historian Ron Cockrell, officials from Truman Library knew the contents of the will before Mrs. Truman died, and had discussions with NPS officials regarding the possibility of the NPS taking over the administration; Ron Cockrell oral history interview, December 18, 2015.

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² Press Release, National Park Service, December 20, 1982; files of Harry S Truman NHS.

⁷³ Telephone report, Dan Salisbury, WASO to J.L. Dunning, MWRO, December 16, 1982; files Harry S Truman NHS, H14. See also "1982 Annual Report: Harry S. Truman National Historic Site," files of Harry S Truman NHS.

On-Site Administration: Initial Steps

With security in place by the end of 1982, more active planning for protection and interpretation of the home began in early 1983. In the face of intense public interest and support, both locally and regionally, NPS officials in late 1982 had committed to having the Truman Home open in time for Truman's centennial birthday in May 1984. This commitment left fewer than eighteen months to prepare both the home and the administrative infrastructure that would undertake its protection, maintenance, and interpretation. A briefing paper prepared in January 1983 outlined the situation at the Truman Home, emphasizing the need for an on-site NPS presence. According to the briefing paper, Independence was planning to celebrate the centennial of Harry S Truman's birth beginning in the fall of 1983, with the principal observation taking place on May 8, 1984, Mr. Truman's 100th birthday. The Truman Library was serving as the principal location of the celebrations, and, because the Truman Home is only one mile away, "the NPS will be expected to have the home open and be involved in the centennial observations." If NPS lags in its progress toward having the home open, the briefing warned, the public will notice: "The pressure that was experienced prior to the Secretary's designation of Harry S. Truman National Historic Site gives an indication of the interest of the Missouri Congressional delegation and the strength of support they can muster on this issue."⁷⁴

The briefing paper went on to observe that NPS had yet to have any contact with Margaret Truman Daniel (Figure 13). Good relations with Mrs. Daniel were crucial to NPS, it stated, because her mother's will provided for extensive involvement by Mrs. Daniel in the management of the home and allowed Margaret to stay there one week per year. Experience at other Presidential sites, including Herbert Hoover, Franklin D. Roosevelt, and Lyndon B. Johnson had demonstrated "the need for positive relations with members of former Presidents' families." Given the drive to prepare the home for opening on an accelerated schedule, to coordinate closely with the Truman Library, Margaret Truman Daniel, and the City of Independence, and to oversee the home's maintenance needs, the brief recommended having an on-site NPS representative. The Midwest Regional Office had considered coordinating management of the Truman Home from Jefferson National Expansion Memorial in St. Louis, Missouri, but ultimately decided against it. The needs for management and planning of the home, including developing programming documents, recruiting staff, overseeing routine maintenance and protection, developing an interpretive program, and training the staff to carry it out, called for a more hands-on approach than remote management would allow.⁷⁵

⁷⁴ "Briefing Statement: Harry S. Truman National Historic Site," N.D. (c. January 1983); files of Harry S Truman NHS.

⁷⁵ Ibid. The Superintendent of Jefferson National Expansion Memorial, the largest urban park in Missouri, served as the NPS State Coordinator reporting to the Regional Director and Director on state and local government activities related to DOI, NPS, and NPS park units, proposed and existing, in the state. For the first several years after NPS assumed responsibility for the Harry S Truman NHS, staff from Jefferson National Expansion Memorial assisted the new park to become fully operational.



Figure 13. Margaret Truman Daniel with Superintendent Ronald Mack, 1992. Photo provided by Harry S Truman NHS.

Regional Director J.L. Dunning announced in January 1983 that he had appointed Thomas P. Richter as Ranger-in-Charge at the Truman Home. Richter was then serving as Interpretive Specialist at Jefferson National Expansion Memorial (NEM) in St. Louis. At the Truman Home, Richter would report to Dunning through Jefferson NEM Superintendent Jerry Schober. Ketterson hosted a meeting at the Truman Home on January 19-20, 1983 that included Richter, Schober, Dunning, and Regional Restoration Specialist Lee Jameson. Ketterson, Richter, and Schober toured the home and the NHL Historic District on January 19, and met with Ben Zobrist and Pat O'Brien. During this meeting, Zobrist offered Richter an office at the Truman Library until NPS located suitable administrative space. The next day, Regional Director Dunning arrived with Jameson for another tour through the house and the NHL Historic District. Ketterson and Jameson then met with Robert Sanders, a contractor who had performed maintenance at the home for the Trumans over the years, to discuss immediate preservation needs.⁷⁶

In his report to NPS Director Russell E. Dickenson, Regional Director Dunning announced his decision to appoint Richter as Ranger-in-Charge and noted that Zobrist had offered office space at the Truman Library. Zobrist, Dunning observed, "has bent over backwards in his efforts to help us establish the Truman site. The working arrangements we have with Dr. Zobrist and his staff are some of the best I've ever experienced with any agency during my career with the Service." Zobrist was eager to support NPS in developing a plan of operation, and coordinating activities so as to provide an integrated interpretation to visitors. A key issue, Dunning explained, was the

⁷⁶ Trip Report, Chief, Cultural Resources Management to Associate Regional Director, Planning and Resource Preservation, MWRO, January 19-20, 1983; files of MWRO, L58 (MWR-PC).

condition of the home. The electrical wiring was the most obvious concern. Lights burned out regularly; an electrician was to be on site within a week. This attention to the condition of the house, Dunning added, was received gladly during his meeting with Don Chisholm, attorney for the executor of Bess Truman's will. Chisholm, he said, "seemed to be pleased with the arrangements we were making and had no problem at all with the fact that we intend to operate the home out of our St. Louis office for the time being." According to Chisholm, the best way for NPS to approach Mrs. Daniel was through Zobrist, "since he had been able to establish a personal rapport and felt that she had a great deal of confidence in his judgments."⁷⁷

Dunning followed up his tour of the Truman Home with a letter to Margaret Truman Daniel on February 4, 1983. Dunning apprised her of the appointment of Richter as Ranger-in-Charge and that Richter would have temporary office space in the Truman Library. He also informed her of the proposed work on the electrical system and that they would begin planning for the site in the near future. During that time, he suggested, "we hope to have the benefit of your counsel." Mrs. Daniel responded a week later with a gracious note and informed him that there were some things of hers in the house, "which I have asked Dr. Zobrist to remove. I hope that this will be satisfactory with you." She also cautioned him against opening the house to the public, "as the house will not stand up to it. It's a very old house, and if people are allowed to tramp through it, it will fall down in no time, even though some of the floors have been reinforced."⁷⁸

In subsequent meetings with Zobrist, Dunning learned of the complications involved in the relationship with Mrs. Daniel. In particular, Zobrist described a request from a member of the Secret Service who had been part of Mrs. Truman's security detail and who was an acquaintance of Mrs. Daniel's. This Secret Service officer forwarded a request from Mrs. Daniel to remove an icon of the Virgin Mary that had been given to her father. Zobrist told this story as "an example that Margaret finds it difficult to recognize that the Home and its contents were willed to the Federal Government." Zobrist also suggested that Pat Kerr, who had conducted the partial inventory of the Truman Home in 1981 at Mrs. Daniels' request, had the closest relationship with Mrs. Daniel and could advise NPS staff in how best to approach her. As part of this meeting, Dunning and Zobrist discussed how to respond to Mrs. Daniel's letter of early February in which she questioned the advisability of having visitors in the home. In his reply in April, written shortly after the meeting, Dunning agreed with her regarding concerns for the effect on the house from public tours. He offered to meet with her, either in New York or in Independence, to discuss her concerns and what NPS could do to resolve them..⁷⁹

NPS staff, in Omaha and Independence, were making strong strides toward protection of the Truman Home through the late winter and early spring of 1983 and

⁷⁷ Memorandum, Regional Director, MWRO to Director, National Park Service, January 21, 1983; files of MWRO, L58.

⁷⁸ J.L. Dunning to Margaret Truman Daniel, February 4, 1983; Daniel to Dunning, February 10, 1983; files of Harry S Truman NHS, H14. Mrs. Daniel did not specify in her letter which items she had asked Dr. Zobrist to remove from the home.

⁷⁹ Dunning to Daniel, April 1983 [date obscured]. Files of Harry S Truman NHS, H14. [J.L. Dunning], "Notes of Meeting at Harry S. Truman National Historic Site, March 24, 1983;" files of MWRO, File L58.

planning for its subsequent use. Of immediate concern, the security contract with Federal Protective Service ended on March 31, 1983. Federal Protective Service then negotiated a contract with the Guard Service Company of Kansas City, Missouri, to take over protection of the site on April 1, also on a 24-hour basis. At the same time, Richter worked with Federal Protective Service and the Midwest Region Curator John Hunter to improve security of the home, including installing more powerful exterior lights, wooden bars across the basement windows, and a separate telephone jack that could relay intrusion and fire alarm notices directly to Federal Protective Service's Control Center in Kansas City.⁸⁰

On May 9, then, when Regional Director Dunning met in Independence with Mrs. Daniel for the first time, he would be able to report progress at the home despite not yet having Congressional authorization and appropriations. The tone that the meeting would take remained uncertain. Only three weeks before the meeting, Associate Regional Director for Planning and Resource Protection John Kawamoto informed Ketterson that Zobrist had talked to Mrs. Daniel on the telephone, and the topic of public use of the home came up. "She became very irritated," Kawamoto related, "and, in fact, made a statement that she would just take everything out."⁸¹ During the same call, she also requested that she be given a key to the house during her visit to Independence in May; Truman Library staff passed along this request to Tom Richter.⁸²

It appears that the meeting in Independence between Regional Director Dunning and Mrs. Daniel was far more cordial than these early intimations suggested. The meeting touched on a few major issues, including assuring protection of the home itself as NPS' first priority. Dunning identified as primary concerns repairs to the roof, repairing or replacing cracked joists, and replacement of electrical wiring. Dunning also described their plans for visitor use and entertained suggestions from Mrs. Daniel that the number of visitors be restricted, including a limit of fifteen people on any tour. Dunning informed her that their plans for visitor accommodation included allowing the Truman Library to serve as a departure point for tours, with visitors brought to the Truman Home by shuttle bus to reduce potential traffic in the neighborhood surrounding the home. Dunning also assured Mrs. Daniel that her involvement in development of an interpretive narrative for the home would be welcomed. As a gesture of good will on her part, Mrs. Daniel offered to donate her parents' automobile, a 1972 Chrysler, which remained in the carriage house behind the home, to NPS.⁸³

⁸⁰ Superintendent's Annual Report for 1983 for Harry S Truman National Historic Site; files of Harry S Truman NHS.

⁸¹ Memorandum, John Kawamoto to Andy Ketterson, April 14, 1983; files of MWRO, L58.

⁸² Memorandum, Vicky, Truman Library to Tom Richter, April 21, 1983; files of Harry S Truman NHS, H14. No response from Richter was identified during the current research, and Mrs. Daniel was never provided with a key to the home.

⁸³ J.L. Dunning, Regional Director to Mrs. Margaret Truman Daniel, May 24, 1983; carbon copy in files of MWRO, L7019. In his handwritten comments on Cockrell's 1984 draft history of the early implementation of the Truman Home, Tom Richter noted that the car "already belonged to the fed. gov't by terms of the will!" Ron Cockrell, "CRM's Mobilize to Activate Harry S Truman NHS," draft article for *CRM Bulletin*, unpublished, with handwritten comments by Tom Richter, 1984; files of Harry S Truman NHS, H22

As the enabling legislation worked its way through Congress in early 1983, and with the home generally secure and coming under the care of NPS restoration specialists, NPS officials in Omaha and Independence began planning for the future use of the Truman Home. These planning efforts were remarkably far-sighted, and established approaches and policies that continue to guide the site and provide positive visitor experiences including maintenance, interpretation, research and documentation, and curatorial care for the collections. At the same time, NPS staff encountered challenges during this initial period, prior to opening the Truman Home to the public, that also remain in place, particularly those from ongoing budget constraints.

Initial Staffing

Thomas P. Richter entered on duty as Ranger-in-Charge on January 23, 1983. With an academic background in history, Richter had worked as a Supervisory Interpreter at NEM since 1977 prior to his appointment to the Truman Home. Working from an office provided by the Truman Library, Richter coordinated closely with MWRO staff on all planning for the site. Richter also served as the local face of NPS in Independence, where interest in the progress of the site was high. He was active with many local and regional historical and tourism groups, including the city's Heritage Commission and Tourism Advisory Board, and took part in the Harry S. Truman Centennial Commission. Richter worked closely with the City of Independence staff, especially Independence Historic Preservation Officer Pat O'Brien and Planning Director William Bullard. Additionally, he developed a good rapport with the Jackson County Historical Society, as well as a close, working relationship with Dr. Ben Zobrist and other members of the Harry S. Truman Library staff.

Richter was the sole NPS staff on site through the spring and summer of 1983. In the fall, however, as planning efforts were accelerating in preparation for the public opening in May 1984, MWRO hired two permanent staff members for the site. Norman J. Reigle was selected as the first Superintendent of the Harry S Truman NHS and entered on duty on October 2, 1983 (Figure 14). Reigle began his NPS career in 1968 at Grand Teton National Park and had served at several parks, the Denver Service Center, and the Rocky Mountain Regional Office. He was transferred to Harry S Truman NHS from his position as Chief Ranger at Ozark National Scenic Riverways, to serve his first appointment as a Superintendent.⁸⁴ Richter was then assigned the position of Chief Ranger on the same day that Reigle entered on duty. Richter proved influential to the new Superintendent regarding formulation of plans for the interpretation of the home, including convincing Reigle to offer formal conducted tours, which offer the potential for more meaningful visitor experience, rather than station-to-station, self-guided tours even though conducted tours require a larger interpretive staff. Once Reigle was on staff, he

⁸⁴ Norman J. Reigle, oral history interview, December 13, 1985.



Figure 14. Superintendent Norman Reigle, 1984. Photo provided by Harry S Truman NHS.



Figure 15. Administrative Technician Joan Sanders, 1984. Photo provided by Harry S Truman NHS.

hired Joan L. Sanders as the first Administrative Technician (Figure 15). Sanders had alerted MWRO personnel staff that she was interested in working there shortly after hearing that Richter had been appointed as Ranger-in-Charge in early 1983. A retired Marine, she transferred to Harry S Truman NHS from Lincoln Home NHS in Springfield, Illinois, where she served as the Administrative Officer. Sanders entered on duty November 27, 1983. Reigle and Sanders then planned for the expansion of staff based on Reigle's vision for the site, frequently at the lounge of the Howard Johnson Hotel in Independence which served as a remote, informal office for Independence staff and for visiting NPS staff.⁸⁵ The two prepared a proposed organizational chart which they presented in a meeting at MWRO in early January 1984. The meeting, as Sanders recalled, was a success:

I don't recall how many people were in that meeting, but there were a lot of people in that meeting, and they were firing questions at us right and left regarding each individual position we had identified on that organizational chart. We justified every one of them the best way we knew how, and we got every one of them. We got authorization to fill every one of them, we got the money to pay for it, and the FTE [full-time equivalent], when we walked out of there that day.⁸⁶

The initial administrative staff was then completed on April 1, 1984, when Jenny Hayes entered on duty as Secretary (Figure 16).⁸⁷ Other staff were hired in 1984 and will be discussed later in this chapter.



Figure 16. Secretary Jenny Hayes, 1984. Photo provided by Harry S Truman NHS.

⁸⁵ The Howard Johnson Hotel was chosen largely because of its convenient location on Noland Road, just south of the Interstate 70 exit.

⁸⁶ Joan Sanders, oral history interview, April 28, 1990.

⁸⁷ Ibid; see also Superintendent's Annual Report for 1983.

Funding

The structural assessments of the Truman Home in early 1983 raised additional concerns over the budget for the site. Because the home came under NPS authority somewhat suddenly, MWRO officials had no time to develop a site-specific budget either for FY83 or FY84. Instead, they used a series of funding sources that were available through May 1983, when the enabling legislation authorized funds. In an undated summary prepared in 1983, Andy Ketterson outlined anticipated costs for activating Harry S Truman NHS, and the proposed sources of funds. Much of the funds came from the 1982 Act of Congress aimed at employment, which provided \$50,000 for repairs to the roof and associated features and an additional \$25,000 for the electrical repairs, both of which were already funded for Fiscal Year (FY) 1983. In addition, funds for the *Historic Structures Report* (HSR), the historical narrative of which was being prepared at the time by MWRO staff, were provided through Operations of the National Park Service (ONPS) funds, one of the major segments of NPS's discretionary spending budget. Ketterson anticipated that the Architect/Engineering component of the HSR would be awarded in September 1983. Ketterson identified funds that he anticipated using, including \$100,000 to complete the HSR and \$25,000 for the preparation of a Historic Furnishings Report, both of which were included in MWRO's FY84 advance planning program. Ketterson also identified an additional \$50,000 in projects for which funding was then uncertain, including exterior painting, visitor use carpeting, barriers and security systems, handicapped access provisions, repairs to furniture and wallpaper, a historic grounds and historic landscaping plan, stabilization of the carriage house, and additional, still-to-be-discovered, necessary repairs to the Truman Home.⁸⁸ It was a daunting list and, given the early structural inspections of the home, likely an underestimate. Despite the early success in securing staff positions, budget constraints would continue to pose a challenge to the site.

The 1983 enabling legislation provided \$160,000 for the Truman Home in FY83. Unfortunately, the contract for guard service at the home, combined with the salary for the Ranger-in-Charge, took up near all this amount, while the second legislation pertaining to the site directed NPS to reimburse the estate of Bess Wallace Truman for costs which they sustained in providing security for the home before NPS assumed authority in December 1982. For FY84, MWRO increased funding for the site to \$250,000, together with additional employee allotments. In November 1983, Reigle prepared a budget proposal for MWRO that included an increase of \$50,600 for the remainder of FY84 and an additional increase of \$65,000 for FY85. A large part of this increase was driven by substantial growth in the size of the staff.⁸⁹ In January 1984, Regional Director Charles H. Odegaard submitted a request to the Budget Division of NPS Washington Office for additional funds totaling \$42,200 for the Truman Home. Noting that "Both political and public interest in the Truman home is already very high,"

⁸⁸ "Costs for Activating Harry S Truman NHS," undated typescript with handwritten comments; files of Harry S Truman NHS, H14.

⁸⁹ Memorandum, Superintendent, HSTR to Acting Regional Director, MWRO, November 8, 1983; files of Harry S Truman NHS, H14.

he encouraged the Washington Office provide any assistance possible.⁹⁰ As reported by Reigle in his annual report for 1984, the ONPS allocation for the Truman Home for FY84 totaled \$296,800.⁹¹

Maintenance

The physical condition of the Truman Home was a concern from the time of Ketterson's first visit in November 1982. During the years of Harry Truman's poor health beginning in the late 1960s until his death in 1972 and continuing through the rest of Bess Truman's life, the home saw little in the way of substantial maintenance. Health and other concerns took precedence over upgrades to the house. As a result, it needed extensive work, frequently on an emergency basis, from the very earliest days of NPS's involvement. In a separate report of the meetings among representatives of NPS, Truman Library, and the Estate of Bess Wallace Truman on January 19-20, 1983, Restoration Architect Lee Jameson described the results of his preliminary investigation of the house, the first by NPS. Agreeing with Regional Director Dunning that the electrical wiring was in poor condition and should be replaced, Jameson identified other problems as well. While the foundation, framing, and structural members appeared to be in good condition with a few exceptions, he said, the roof system needed to be replaced. In particular, the metal portions of the flat roofs over the porches were leaking badly, as were the flashing and gutters. The poor condition of the roof had allowed water damage in the house, particularly in the southeast corner of the bathroom addition where water from the porch above was seeping into the room. In addition, much of the exterior woodwork, including fascia, soffits, caps and lintels, dentils, bargeboards, fretwork, latticework, and porch posts needed repair or replacement, and the entire exterior needed to be painted. His recommendations for immediate work including testing the entire electrical system and estimating the amount of flashing and gutter work that would be needed to prevent further leaking until funding became available for major reroofing.⁹²

Within weeks of the January meeting, major leaks in the roof brought Jameson back to Independence for emergency repairs. The metal portions of the roof had been patched before, he found, and he resorted to additional patches and to covering the second floor sleeping porch with plastic to keep water out of the first floor bathroom. Less than two months later, in April 1983, additional heavy rains created more major leaks; Tom Richter recalled having to patch many of the leaks himself before Jameson could arrive from Omaha, and he noted that the ceiling plaster in the second floor hall was in danger of falling due to water damage.⁹³

⁹⁰ Memorandum, Regional Director, MWRO to Assistant Director, Financial and Data Systems, WASO, January 27, 1984; files of Harry S Truman NHS, F34.

⁹¹ Superintendent's Annual Report for 1984.

⁹² Memorandum, Restoration Specialist to Associate Regional Director, Planning and Resource Preservation, MWRO, January 26, 1983; files of MWRO, L58 (MWR-PC).

⁹³ Ron Cockrell, "CRM's Mobilize to Activate Harry S Truman NHS," 1984. Draft article with handwritten comments by Thomas P. Richter; files of Harry S Truman NHS, H22.

Throughout 1983, maintenance work at the Truman Home consisted primarily of completing small emergency repairs and beginning the planning work for future long-term projects. Much of this work was led by Regional Restoration Specialist Lee Jameson, though he was soon assisted by Historical Architect Al O’Bright and Restoration Specialist Michael Lee, who both began working full-time at MWRO in the fall of 1983 (Figure 17). Emergency work in 1983, in addition to the roof leaks, included repairs to the flat-seam metal roof covering the porch above the first-floor bathroom, shoring up a sagging floor joist in the basement, replacing broken window panes, and shoring up the front porch by placing concrete blocks and jacks beneath its foundation.⁹⁴

Several maintenance projects were completed in 1984 prior to the public opening in May, much of which was related to the roof, which continued to have substantial problems with leaking. In the spring of 1984, MWRO contracted with Penn Perry, Inc. to replace the portions of the roof that were clad in flat-seam metal roofing, together with all metal flashing, gutters, and wood braces. Working under a tight deadline, the work was conducted between March 17 and April 15, 1984.⁹⁵ Unfortunately, a major ice storm hit Independence during that period, and the contractor’s failure to secure the roof covering during construction allowed substantial water leakage into the building, requiring additional emergency assistance from MWRO.⁹⁶ The heavy water infiltration threatened the plaster ceiling in the second floor hallway, which appeared near collapse. Jameson constructed an emergency scaffold on the second floor to catch any plaster that might fall.⁹⁷

Other work in 1984 prior to the home’s opening included rewiring the home, including disconnecting the overhead service and installing it underground, and replacing the sidewalk from the gate to the front door of the home. Al O’Bright and Michael Lee oversaw the electrical work in the interior of the home. During the course of the work, O’Bright and Lee investigated the installation of a chandelier that hung in the dining room, a gift from Mrs. Daniel to her parents. To understand how it was connected to the ceiling, they removed the floor boards in the upstairs bedroom above the chandelier. As Cockrell recounted in 1984, “What they saw horrified them. The heavy chandelier was supported by only two small wood screws and no reinforcement! The elegant light was quickly disconnected, rewired, and reinstalled with a new support system.”⁹⁸

The home also needed extensive repairs to the exterior woodwork and complete exterior painting. Such major repairs were delayed until after the public opening, however, at the insistence of Acting Regional Director Randall Pope. As Superintendent Reigle recalled, “it was determined that we were not going to be in the midst of painting and having the scaffolding up when we were dedicating the house, and there just wasn’t time to get that done the way it should be done in the eight months that were remaining.

⁹⁴ Memorandum, Restoration Specialist to Associate Regional Director, Planning and Resource Preservation, MWRO, June 21, 1983; files of MWRO, L58 (MWR-PC). See also Al O’Bright, oral history interview, January 27, 2016.

⁹⁵ Summary of Work, Metal Roof Replacement, Truman Home, 1984; files of MWRO

⁹⁶ Superintendent’s Annual Report for 1984; see also Al O’Bright, oral history interview, January 27, 2015.

⁹⁷ Cockrell, “CRM’s Mobilize to Activate Harry S Truman NHS,” 12.

⁹⁸ Ibid.



Figure 17. Historical Architect Al O'Bright and Park Technician Cindy Ott, c. 1985. Photo provided by Harry S Truman NHS.

Randy Pope made that decision, a very, very wise decision in retrospect.” Reigle also opined that Chief of Cultural Resources Andy Ketterson was “key in getting the preservation and restoration of the Truman home off to a solid footing. A remarkable job.”⁹⁹

All maintenance work at the Truman Home was coordinated through MWRO through April 1984. Lee Jameson was the principal regional contact, with Al O’Bright and Mike Lee providing additional support. Midwest Regional Historical Architect Francis O. “Fran” Krupka also directed work and ensured that historic preservation practices were followed. As Reigle gained support from MWRO for hiring staff, he selected Gregory P. (Skip) Brooks as the Facility Management Specialist in early March 1984 (Figure 18). Brooks entered on duty at Harry S Truman NHS on April 15, 1984, on a transfer from Richmond National Battlefield, Virginia.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁹ Norm Reigle, oral history interview, December 13, 1985, p. 22.

¹⁰⁰ “All for the Love of Harry”—notes prepared by Administrative Technician Joan Sanders, June 1984; files of Harry S Truman NHS, H14.



Figure 18. Chief of Facility Management Skip Brooks, 1984. Photo provided by Harry S Truman NHS.

Cultural Resources

Through the spring of 1983, as legislation to declare the Harry S Truman NHS a unit of the National Park System was working its way through Congress, NPS staff was using a mix of funding sources to establish a baseline of protection for the home. With a full-time staff member in Independence working from an office in the Truman Library, the most immediate and threatening maintenance issues were being treated, the home was under 24-hour security, and the thousands of artifacts in it were beginning to receive a degree of care and protection.

Richter's initial concern regarding those artifacts was to maintain control over them, keeping them safe and in the home. With no inventory or catalog of his own, with hired security patrolling the house, and with windows and doors that had ordinary locks at best, this was a challenging task. In response to a request from the District Commander of the Federal Protective Service, for example, Richter stated that only those objects needing curatorial care were allowed to leave the building, and he provided a list of the only personnel who were authorized to check out items: himself, Ketterson, Regional Curator John Hunter, and Patricia Kerr and Elizabeth Safly from the Truman Library.¹⁰¹

¹⁰¹ Thomas P. Richter to Captain William Mayberry, February 16, 1983; files of MWRO, L58.

Richter had a background as a historian rather than as a curator and needed assistance and advice in establishing procedures for management and conservation of the Home's contents. MWRO Staff Curator John Hunter arranged for a meeting with Richter in Independence on March 14, 1983. In anticipation of the meeting, Hunter sent Richter a collection of reference materials for NPS curation guidelines; the principal reference, Hunter informed him, was NPS's *Manual for Museums*. Hunter also provided advice on securing drawers of desks and dressers "against pilferage by the contract guards," and announced that he had already made contact with staff in the Conservation Division at NPS's Harpers Ferry Center in West Virginia, on the assumption that many of the items would require advanced treatment.¹⁰²

The meeting between Richter and Hunter in March was lengthy, with Hunter outlining the curatorial needs of the home both immediate and long-term. Hunter identified key steps for Richter to take, including monitoring the home for temperature and humidity, keeping sunlight off the furnishings, improving the conditions of windows to allow them to be closed and latched, relocating or covering items in the upper floor and attic that were threatened by water infiltration, and installing multiple fire extinguishers on all floors. Hunter also provided Richter with a curatorial kit and coordinated with Federal Protective Services personnel regarding means to protect the home against fire and theft.¹⁰³

In addition to Hunter's assistance, staff from the Historic Furnishings Branch at NPS's Harpers Ferry Center (HFC) in West Virginia began supporting Richter and MWRO curators in the summer of 1983. Chief of Historic Furnishings Branch Sarah M. Olson had taken part in initial interpretive planning efforts in July 1983 together with HFC Deputy Manager Ellsworth Swift. In addition to preparing the Historic Furnishings Plan, which will be discussed in Chapter 4, Olson consulted with Richter and MWRO on the conservation of artifacts. In November 1983, she identified eleven items of furniture and five accessories that required treatment in the conservation laboratory in Harpers Ferry. The items of furniture sent to HFC suffered primarily from damaged finishes, though some also had either warping, missing pieces, or damaged upholstery.¹⁰⁴ The items were shipped to West Virginia in early January 1984, and repairs were completed in early April. The plan was to have the furniture back in the home by the time NBC's *Today Show* filmed there on April 13, 1984.¹⁰⁵

As described in greater detail in Chapter 9, the ownership status of the furnishings in the home remained unclear throughout the initial implementation of the park, despite the will of Bess Wallace Truman in which she bequeathed the home and its contents, except for her jewelry and clothing, to the United States. These named personal items were to go to her daughter. The confusion over ownership of the rest was due in part to

¹⁰² Memorandum, Staff Curator, Midwest Regional Office to Ranger-in-Charge, Harry S. Truman NHS, March 1, 1983; files of Harry S Truman NHS, D6215.

¹⁰³ Memorandum, Staff Curator to Chief, Division of Interpretation, April 1, 1983; files of MWRO, L58.

¹⁰⁴ Memorandum, Chief, Branch of Historic Furnishings to Superintendent, Harry S. Truman NHS, November 30, 1983; files of MWRO, H3019 (1100 RSF).

¹⁰⁵ Chief, Division of Conservation, HFC to Conservators, Division of Conservation, HFC, March 8, 1984; files of Harry S Truman NHS, D6215.

the second codicil to Mrs. Truman's will, which required written approval by her daughter for the "manner in which the residence is used" by the United States and, in part, to the role that the Truman Library staff played in removing Mr. Truman's personal papers under the terms of his will. The issue was raised early when the need arose to ship the eleven pieces of furniture and five accessories to Harpers Ferry Center for conservation. Superintendent Reigle wrote to Mrs. Daniel at the beginning of 1984, requesting her permission to have the items removed from the home and sent to West Virginia.¹⁰⁶ The status of the furnishings was finally settled when Mrs. Daniel and NPS entered into a MOA regarding the furnishings in 1986.

The process of cataloging the artifacts in the home began in the fall of 1983. Staff Curator John Hunter made arrangements for Susan Kopczynski to work on a six-month detail in Independence, beginning on November 27, 1983. Kopczynski had been a Museum Curator at Thomas Edison National Historical Park, New Jersey, before becoming a Park Ranger at Morristown National Historical Park, New Jersey, in 1976. She was detailed from Morristown primarily to catalog artifacts, particularly on the first floor, and to establish housekeeping and maintenance programs. She was also requested to work with Sarah Olson to identify conservation needs.¹⁰⁷ Kopczynski completed the initial cataloging of much of the first floor during her detail, providing a strong start to understanding the scope of the home's furnishings.¹⁰⁸ As Joan Sanders recalled later, Kopczynski's principal task "was getting an inventory of the stuff in the house, which at that time the ballpark estimate was ten thousand. And that turned out to be *grossly* underestimated."¹⁰⁹

The initial cataloging process was conducted without benefit of a computer. In late 1983, Staff Curator John Hunter began looking into purchasing a computer primarily for use in cataloging the Truman Home. Although he had \$15,000 available under Midwest Region Package 810, designed to provide for small collections cataloging in the Midwest Region, the computer and software would cost between \$8500 and \$9500. The Regional Office decided not to purchase the computer due to its cost and because it would not be delivered to Independence until the middle of 1984, "well after collections cataloging will have begun. Thus, it will not be possible for cataloging to be done directly on the computer; at best, your staff would use the computer only as a word processor for preparing typed catalog forms from existing worksheets." Hunter still recommended that Reigle continue to pursue purchasing a computer for the site's collections catalog, but "to do so deliberately and carefully."¹¹⁰

Despite the lack of a computer for collections management, the park's curatorial program took a major step forward in 1984 when Steve Harrison was hired as the

¹⁰⁶ Norman J. Reigle to Mrs. Margaret Truman Daniel, January 3, 1984; files of Harry S Truman NHS, H14.

¹⁰⁷ Memorandum, Staff Curator, MWRO to Chief Curator, WASO, November 10, 1983; files of Harry S Truman NHS, D6215 (MWR-MI).

¹⁰⁸ Steve Harrison oral history interview, March 1, 2016.

¹⁰⁹ Joan Sanders oral history interview, April 28, 1990.

¹¹⁰ Memorandum, Acting Regional Director, MWRO to Superintendent, Harry S Truman, December 27, 1983; files of Harry S Truman NHS, D6215.

permanent Curator (Figure 19). Harrison had been with NPS for ten years and had been serving as Curator at Jefferson National Expansion Memorial, where he had worked with Richter, since 1980. Harrison was detailed to the Truman Home temporarily in October 1983, at Richter's suggestion, to perform a thorough cleaning of the house. The immediate goal at that time was to get the home ready for the filming of a special feature for the television program *Smithsonian World* on November 19, 1983. Assisted by Richter, Reigle, and Kopczynski, Harrison did a thorough cleaning of the first floor of the home for the first time since NPS assumed responsibility.¹¹¹

Harrison's permanent position was one of those which Reigle and Sanders had proposed to MWRO in early January 1984, and which was allocated on January 27, 1984. He entered on duty at Harry S Truman NHS on February 19, 1984. As a result of his arrival, Kopczynski's detail was reduced from six months to three. Harrison's first task was to develop the curatorial program for the park. His immediate goal was to prepare the home for the opening in May, while he also continued the process that Kopczynski had begun of cataloging the vast range of artifacts. In doing so, he quickly developed a guiding principle for understanding the contents of the home and their arrangement. This guiding principle has remained in place since then. As Harrison recalled, "I had a strong feeling that we needed to respect the Trumans—Mr. and Mrs. Truman and their house, their things. . . . we're not refurbishing. We're not re-creating, we're not making this up. This is their stuff in their house. It's been in the same place it had been for decades. That we needed to be very cognizant of that and respectful of that." This sense of respect for the Trumans and their home led to several innovative approaches to cataloging the artifacts, including, for instance, great precision in documenting and maintaining the location of items in the home down to the smallest detail such as toothpicks left on counters and rubber bands hung on door knobs.¹¹²

Undoubtedly the largest artifact which NPS had to consider was Harry Truman's automobile, which remained in the carriage house after Bess Truman's death. The car is a 1972 Chrysler Newport four-door sedan with Missouri license plate 5745, which commemorates the Allied victory in Europe in World War II on May 7, 1945 (Figure 20). Mrs. Daniel, in one of her first meetings with MWRO staff, offered to donate it to NPS, though the car appears to have been a part of Mrs. Truman's bequest. One of the first concerns was to seek to have the license plate number retired both in tribute to Mr. Truman and to make sure that the number was not issued again. Regional Director Dunning made this request to Secretary of State for Missouri James C. Kirkpatrick in April 1983.¹¹³ The State of Missouri initially reserved the number for only fifteen months. In early October 1984, however, Superintendent Reigle requested that the number be retired permanently. As he explained in his request, "the significance of May 7, 1945 (5/7/45) as V-E Day is a unique part of the Truman Story. The fact that he picked

¹¹¹ Superintendent's Annual Report for 1983; Steve Harrison oral history interview, March 1, 2016. See also request for Harrison's assistance in Memorandum, Acting Superintendent, Harry S Truman to Superintendent, Jefferson MEM, October 28, 1983; files of Harry S Truman NHS, D6215.

¹¹² Steve Harrison, oral history interview, March 1, 2016.

¹¹³ J.L. Dunning, WRO to James C. Kirkpatrick, Secretary of State for Missouri, April 6, 1983; files of Harry S Truman NHS, L58 (MWR-PC).

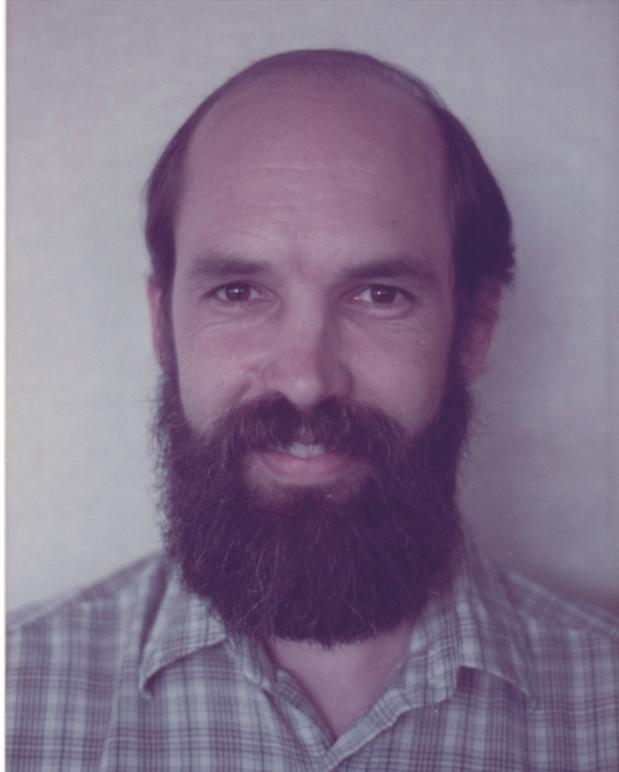


Figure 19. Chief of Cultural Resources Steve Harrison, 1984. Photo provided by Harry S Truman NHS.



Figure 20. Harry S Truman's automobile, undated. Photo provided by Harry S Truman NHS.

that for his Missouri license plate number will have lasting importance as we share the Truman story with the countless visitors who will tour the Truman home.” The Director of the Missouri Department of Revenue agreed and, on October 29, 1984, announced that the number was being removed permanently from the issuance files.¹¹⁴ At the same time, Richter inquired with the Transport Museum Association in St. Louis to request an appraisal of the car. The recommended market value at the time was approximately \$25,000 based on its low mileage of 18,743, its good maintenance record, and its personal association with Mr. Truman.¹¹⁵

Security and protection of the contents of the Truman Home were key to preparing for the opening in May 1984. The particular value of the home as a house museum is its intimate setting, with the many items both large and small in the modest-sized rooms, just as the Trumans left them. The size of the rooms meant that, during tours, visitors would pass close to many of the desks, dressers, tables, and shelves, and the opportunities for theft were great. Harrison, therefore, developed unobtrusive means to protect items both large and small, including placing marbles in containers to make them noisy if moved and using inert museum wax under smaller items, making them difficult for visitors to remove unobtrusively, while silverware was lightly stitched with clear thread onto fabric beneath the placemats. Harrison, with the support of Museum Aide Lisa Bosso who entered on duty March 4, 1984, also removed the original carpets and replaced them with modern versions, then used neutral gray carpet runners that served as a path for visitors and as protection for floors and carpets beneath (Figure 21). Small pressure mats with an alarm that went off were then placed to warn visitors who stepped into a room that it was off limits. All these security provisions were designed to be reversible, doing no permanent damage to the home or its contents.¹¹⁶ The few weeks leading up to the home’s opening were particularly hectic for the curatorial staff. Museum Aide Lisa Bosso recalled the frantic months leading up to the opening in 1984:

I mean, it’s amazing the things that we did in. . . two and a half months to get the home open for public [sic]. I mean, it was amazing. From taking up all the carpet, the original carpet, and getting down the new carpet, making sure that the grays were just right, and moving the furniture. I mean, that in itself was. . . Set all the furniture to one side while we’d get the carpet in, and then we had these men bringing in huge rolls of carpet, and Steve [Harrison] and I were panicking that they were going to scrape the lincrusta. . . There was a lot of controversy on it, as far as to take up the carpeting or not take it up.

With the hundreds of thousands of visitors in the home in the first several years, she recalled, “I mean, imagine that on the carpet. But just the preparation just to get that carpet up and the new carpet in. Because that was historic carpeting. Let’s hope that fifty

¹¹⁴ Norman J. Reigle to Richard A. King, Missouri Department of Revenue, October 1, 1984; King to Reigle, October 29, 1984; files of Harry S Truman NHS, H20.

¹¹⁵ John P. Roberts, Secretary, National Museum of Transport to Thomas P. Richter, May 14, 1983; files of Harry S Truman NHS, H20.

¹¹⁶ Steve Harrison, oral history interview, March 1, 2016; Lisa Bosso Houston, oral history interview, August 31, 1990.



Figure 21. Museum Aide Lisa Bosso (L) with May Wallace, undated. Photo provided by Harry S Truman NHS.

years from now [1990] somebody can put that back in.” Bosso was also responsible for replacing a bracket on the newel lamp on the staircase, finding a supplier who could fabricate it correctly. Bosso was in the Truman Home following the ice storm in March 1984, when leaks in the roof allowed water to enter the home from attic down to the first floor foyer: “We had buckets all over. Geez! And that morning, [Superintendent] Norm Reigle had a terrible nosebleed in the house. I mean, it was just like what else could happen?”¹¹⁷

Once the contents of the home had been cleaned and secured for the opening in May 1984, Harrison was able to get to work on the massive job of cataloging. With a collection that numbers over 50,000 artifacts of all descriptions, sizes and types, the scale of the cataloging operation was enormous. In early January 1984, Reigle and Sanders began the process of recruiting for several new staff positions, one of which was a museum aide to assist the curator. The first of these was Lisa Bosso, who was hired to begin work on March 4, 1984. Other aides followed in the coming months and years, including Jackie Holt, Richard Raymond, and Brian Hoduski. As Harrison recalled, cataloging “was a big, big job. Lots of work, and we sometimes had two teams—two teams of two, working on that in the house. Little tables and folding chairs and so on, and lights and all that that we had set up.” Harrison and his crew kept meticulous notes regarding the location of individual items, so that the precise setting of the home could be restored, if needed, down to the level of the placement of particular items within desk

¹¹⁷ Lisa Bosso Houston, oral history interview, August 31, 1990.

drawers.¹¹⁸ Their work in the first two years of NPS responsibility established a solid baseline for the curation and documentation of the entire contents of the home. A more thorough description of the complex process of cataloging the Truman Home collections is provided in Chapter 9.

Administrative Office/Visitor Center

From the earliest days of NPS's association with the Harry S Truman Home, the possibility of using the Truman Library as a ticketing and departure point for visitors to the Home was a point of discussion. NPS and the Truman Library had a natural affinity, and the respective staffs worked together with great collegiality. The ties were strengthened when NPS accepted the offer from Dr. Zobrist of office space for the first Truman Home staff. Zobrist raised the possibility of coordinating operations, interpretation, and visitor services during his first meeting with Regional Director Dunning in January 1983, and the possibility remained present through the summer and into the fall.¹¹⁹ Late in March 1983, for example, in a meeting with Dunning and Richter, Zobrist "indicated that he would be very willing to discuss any proposal we had even including administrative needs being housed at the Library. Since he is very anxious, and I agree that we should have representation at the Library to greet the visitor [sic.] and then carry them to the Home by small bus, this might be a good interim solution to have all of our activities at the Library."¹²⁰ Zobrist also offered NPS the use of an under-utilized theater at a secondary entrance to the Truman Library. If adopted, that entrance would have been the NPS location for providing Truman Home information and ticket distribution.

No solid proposals for coordinating activities between NPS and the Truman Library were realized by either party, though, and the idea remained dormant. After Superintendent Norm Reigle entered on duty in October 1983, he began to formulate operational plans for the site. Chief among them was the location of two functions which he kept separate for planning purposes: tour administration ticket distribution, and visitor reception; and NPS site administrative offices. With regard to the administrative offices, Reigle realized that his staff, consisting of only three people including himself by the end of 1983, likely would grow considerably larger very shortly and would soon outgrow the space that the Truman Library had available. Instead, knowing that the City of Independence was then trying to foster a tourism program around the Truman Centennial, Reigle approached the city about "a staging facility that would be compatible with their tourism program."¹²¹

Visitor reception and dispensing tickets for tours of the Truman Home were the first order of business. In discussions with Independence Mayor Barbara Potts and Pat

¹¹⁸ Ibid.

¹¹⁹ Memorandum, Regional Director, MWRO to Director, NPS, January 21, 1983; files of MWRO.

¹²⁰ Dunning, "Notes of Meeting at Harry S. Truman National Historic Site," March 24, 1983; files of MWRO, L58.

¹²¹ Norm Reigle, oral history interview, December 13, 1985, p. 9.

O'Brien, the city's Historic Preservation Officer, the historic fire station No. 1 was raised as a possibility for this function. The Jackson County Historical Society operated out of the historic jail next door to the historic fire station and was eager to have NPS visitor facilities adjacent to their building. In discussions with Sally Schwenk, executive director of the Historical Society, they agreed to "take a unified frontal assault in accomplishing this, that the Jackson County Historical Society would volunteer to staff the ticket center for us, in cooperation with the city." Their plan was to have the city remodel the first floor of the fire station, then being used as a shop facility for city parks workers, and provide a shuttle system to the city's tourist sites including the Truman Home. For their part, the Historical Society would secure the counters and display cabinets, operate a gift shop, and staff the ticket booth which would serve both the Truman Home and the Historical Society. According to Reigle, "That was the rationale for getting that whole program started downstairs, and for the first year it operated very satisfactorily."¹²²

In early January 1984, Richter met with staff from HFC regarding preparation of an audio-visual program for the proposed visitor center, the location of which was not yet determined. Richter prepared a draft script and suggested historical photographs for the program, which HFC completed in time for the dedication ceremony in May 1984. Richter also worked with HFC on the development of a brochure for the park. The audio-visual program, the brochure, and the ticket reservation system were in place for the start of tours in May 1984, with all house tour tickets distributed before noon and handled by the Jackson County Historical Society staff and volunteers. Richter also represented NPS on the operating committee of the Jackson County Historical Society to coordinate the activities of the gift shop, advising them on NPS standards for sales items.¹²³

When the initial plans for the fire station were developed in late 1983 and early 1984, only the first floor was considered for use as a ticketing center and gift shop. As designed, the first floor did not have sufficient space for administrative offices, curatorial work space, or visitors seeking to avoid inclement weather in addition to the visitor services facilities. In the late fall of 1983, Reigle worked with Richter and MWRO staff on office needs before approaching GSA about securing administrative office space. GSA identified three potential locations: 211 North Delaware Street, Park College at 703 West Maple Street, and a former funeral home at 815 West Maple Street.¹²⁴ The last was the most promising candidate, only one and one-half blocks from the Truman Home with adequate office and work space and parking. Built in the 1880s, it was then owned by the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints in Independence (RLDS).¹²⁵ GSA entered into a contract to lease the building in early 1984, and began work on the necessary repairs, including new electrical wiring, new handicapped access, repair of floors, and public restroom facilities. Much of the work had been done by March 1984 before the damaging ice storm that caused the Truman Home to leak as described earlier.

¹²² Ibid., 12.

¹²³ Superintendent's Annual Report for 1984.

¹²⁴ James L. Ryan, Acting Regional Director, MWFO to William Boos, GSA, December 30, 1983; files of Harry S Truman NHS, A8027 (MWR-AC). See also Joan Sanders, oral history interview, April 28, 1990.

¹²⁵ Joan Sanders, oral history interview, April 28, 1990.

The roof of the new administrative office also was damaged and needed to be repaired in time for NPS to take occupancy on April 15, 1984, when staff was expected to arrive.

Unfortunately, nearly all professional roofers in Independence were already contracted to fix other roofs that had been damaged in the storm. A contractor with little experience in roofing agreed to do what was planned as minor repairs so that the interior walls could be replaced before April 15. The roofer was using a blowtorch to weld the seams of the metal roof on Sunday, April 1, and accidentally ignited the underlying roof structure. His attempts to put the initial fire out were unsuccessful, and the building was completely destroyed by fire. Reigle was apprised of the fire by Brent Schondelmeyer, at that time a reporter for the *Kansas City Times*. Reigle recalled the dismay he and the staff felt: “At this point, we have no headquarters, we have no site support, it’s April 1, the dedication is set for May 12, the staff is arriving April 15, the home is scheduled to open on May 15, six weeks. . . . Total gloom, despair, and defeatism prevailed in our little one-room office [in the Truman Library].”¹²⁶

The outpouring from the community was immediate, with offers of office spaces arriving frequently. Fortunately, Independence Historic Preservation Officer Pat O’Brien got word to NPS staff that the second floor of the historic fire station No. 1, the first floor of which was then being renovated for the new visitor center, was available. Reigle and his staff viewed the space on Tuesday, April 3 with a GSA representative, and “ascertained that I could lease a place on a handshake, which is what we did, rent- and utility-free, and the decision was made by about Wednesday to move up here. By Friday of that week, not only had we recovered from all of our losses, we had actually gained a little ground and were back ahead of schedule by Friday of that week.”¹²⁷ The GSA identified \$10,000 in furniture and equipment that was excess property for use in the new office space. The move to the new office space was completed only two days before a large group of new staff arrived on April 15.¹²⁸

Cooperating Associations: Visitor Services and Volunteers

The Jackson County Historical Society initially coordinated Jail Museum gift shop sales and Truman Home tour ticketing through their 1859 Jail Museum Operations Committee. It proved a mixed blessing to the Historical Society through 1984. Admissions to the 1859 Jail Museum doubled that year, making it self-supporting for the first time in its history. This high volume of traffic, however, created strains on the Operations Committee and the Historical Society itself and led to concerns that the size of operations at the Truman Home visitor center was creating conflicts with the Historical Society’s other ongoing work, particularly at the 1859 Jail Museum. At the same time,

¹²⁶ Norm Reigle, oral history interview, December 13, 1985, 17-18. Joan Sanders noted that the day after the fire was Secretary Jenny Hayes’ first day on duty at the Truman Home NHS: “I thought what a way to walk into a brand new job and here you find out your building’s burned out from underneath you,” oral history interview, April 28, 1990.

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*, 19.

¹²⁸ Superintendent’s Annual Report for 1984.

the approach to dispensing tickets for the Truman Home tour often proved frustrating to visitors, which caused additional strains on the volunteers. Superintendent Reigle instituted a policy prior to opening the home for tours that, while the tickets would be free, all visitors to the Truman Home had to appear personally and provide their names and signatures in order to receive their tickets. His goal in establishing this policy was to block leaders of tour groups, for instance, from acquiring large blocks of tickets first thing in the morning; both Reigle and Richter also wanted to know where visitors came from for statistical purposes. This approach kept more tickets available during the day for individuals and small family groups, but visitors who stopped at the Truman Home first, expecting to take the tour, often were perplexed and annoyed by the requirement to travel the five blocks to the ticket center to sign their names and pick up free tickets, and then return to the Truman Home for the tour. This was especially true of family groups, who had to bring every member of the group to the ticket center to sign for their tickets. In addition to making the ticket center more hectic because of the requirement for everyone on a tour to come in, many of the visitors took out their frustrations on the volunteers in the ticket center as well as on the NPS Rangers at the Truman Home.

In early 1985, the Jackson County Historical Society proposed to create a separate Truman Home Ticket Center Operations Committee which could handle the workload associated with running the Jail Museum gift shop but also develop additional programs in conjunction with the Truman Home visitor center that would benefit the Historical Society.¹²⁹ Reigle and other NPS staff apparently also had misgivings about the arrangement despite its success in handling the early ticket distribution smoothly. On March 26, 1985 Reigle submitted a request to MWRO to invite Eastern National Parks and Monuments Association (ENPMA, Eastern National) to assume responsibility for the sale of Truman-related educational items and Truman Home tour ticket distribution in the visitor center. Eastern National, a private non-profit organization, was founded in 1947 by NPS Rangers to serve as a publishing support program for NPS, operating park stores to provide visitors at National Park System sites throughout the eastern United States with educational sales items. The business model of ENPMA includes managing, staffing, and provisioning park stores selling educational items at NPS units and returning a defined portion of the proceeds as a donation to the park for interpretation, education, and research, the three functions to which donations from cooperating associations are restricted. Reigle cited support for this request from the City of Independence and the Truman Library and noted that he would coordinate with the Jackson County Historical Society “to insure that no hardships will result from this action.” The action would, he continued, “enable the Jackson County Historical Society to place more emphasis on maintaining the other facilities in their charge. Our proximity to the Jail Museum will continue to benefit attendance at that site, and will not dilute their already fragile economic resources.”¹³⁰ Nevertheless, after the transition to Eastern National, Jackson County Historical Society volunteers continued to provide invaluable service to help operate the ticket desk.

¹²⁹ Resolution, Jackson County Historical Society, ND (c. 1985); files of Harry S Truman NHS.

¹³⁰ Memorandum, Superintendent, Harry S Truman to Regional Director, Midwest Region, March 18, 1985; files of Harry S Truman NHS, A38 (DCHS).

Given the relationship that MWRO and the Harry S Truman NHS staff had with Eastern National, the request was quickly approved and implemented. In early April 1985, NPS (through the Harry S Truman NHS) and the City of Independence entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) regarding the use of fire station No. 1. Under the MOU, which had a five-year duration, the city was to allow NPS to use both the first and second floors free of rent and utilities (except telephone service), and would provide maintenance on the building without charge. NPS, meanwhile, agreed to provide custodial service for the interior and to maintain a park store and ticketing station on the first floor under the auspices of Eastern National. In addition, NPS would provide an audio-visual program on the Truman Home and provide all of the necessary equipment.¹³¹ In May 1985, Eastern National developed plans for the ticketing center and park store in the visitor center that included a sales and ticketing counter, publication and product displays, a stock room, and brochure racks, the cost of which totaled approximately \$15,000.¹³²

The quality of the Eastern National sales items was far superior to the former gift-shop-type items sold by the Jackson County Historical Society. In 1986, ENPMA provided \$5,000 toward improvements in the visitor center, including installing track lighting, benches, and a counter, together with a portion of the initial interpretive exhibits which HFC developed (see Chapter 10 for a discussion of these exhibits). The park's initial budget and Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) allocation did not allow for NPS staffing of the ticket center, and the park relied on ENPMA to provide these services. Staffing the facility soon became an issue, as ENPMA employees tended to change frequently, primarily due to the low pay scale offered by the cooperating association. Superintendent Reigle made a verbal agreement with ENPMA for a generous staffing level.¹³³ Within several years, however, ENPMA reverted to its normal staff allocation in which it allocated funds to the park to pay for the employees' salaries based on a percentage of yearly sales. According to a summary of relations between ENPMA and the park prepared by NPS staff, the park "went through several 'lead' people." In the summer of 1986, the summary continued, one recently hired staff member "left with about \$1500 that had not been deposited. This led to a great deal of tightening up of hiring procedures and daily SOP's [sic] [standard operating procedures]."¹³⁴ In 1985, ENPMA entered into a contract with the park to provide janitorial services for both the first-floor visitor center and the second-floor headquarters office. This caused more friction when ENPMA determined that the contractors were too expensive. After some discussion and dissension, one of the seasonal Rangers, Mike Gillespie, and his wife, Ginger, agreed to take on the cleaning responsibility, paid by ENPMA.

A complicating factor came in 1987. When the park began collecting fees for tours of the Truman Home, NPS staff were required to handle the ticketing. This reduced

¹³¹ Memorandum of Understanding Between National Park Service and City of Independence pertaining to Fire Station # 1, Independence, Missouri; files of Harry S Truman NHS, A38.

¹³² Eastern National Park & Monument Association, "Agency Improvement Proposal, Harry S Truman NHS," May 1, 1985; files of Harry S Truman NHS.

¹³³ Thomas Richter, recollection provided to MWRO staff.

¹³⁴ "Eastern National Park & Monument Association," typescript report, n.d. (c. 1990); files of Harry S Truman NHS.

the need for ENPMA staff to 1.8 FTE.¹³⁵ Disputes over the appropriate level of staffing continued through the late 1980s but appear to have settled out by 1990. The park continued to receive donations from ENPMA as a percentage of sales. The annual Superintendent's reports in most years recorded the donations made, generally ranging from \$4,000 to \$8,000 annually. Frequently, these were used to fund additions to the park's oral history program, including supplies and transcription services, together with brochures, exhibits, the educational video, and publications. The importance of the ENPMA donations to the oral history program were particularly crucial, supplementing this important research function when park budgets were insufficient to do so.

While Superintendent Reigle was reluctant to use volunteers to provide tours of the Truman Home, he felt he needed to identify a role for volunteers through the Junior Service League of Independence. In his 1985 oral history interview, Reigle made a point of describing the origins of the park's "very successful working relationship" with the Junior Service League: "I think it's important for the administrative history to just kind of say what happened here." Bess Wallace Truman had been a member of the Junior Service League, and the League was actively involved from the beginning with the Truman Library, serving as some of the first guides there. The Junior Service League initially hoped to hold a preview event at the Truman Home as a fund-raising effort for their charitable programs, and met with Reigle to discuss the possibility.¹³⁶ "I was not about to do this," Reigle recalled, "and I clearly stated it to the folks at that meeting. While I agree that the Junior Service League is a very worthwhile function, if I have a special preview fund drive before the Truman home [sic] is open for the Junior Service League, I should have one for the Heart Association, the Lung Association, the Amalgamated Brotherhood of Unwed Mothers, and God knows who else."¹³⁷

In the initial oral history interview which Sarah Olsen conducted with Margaret Truman Daniel in November 1983, Reigle recalled, "it became clear that her [Margaret Truman Daniel's] mother anytime she was entertaining guests in the home loved to have fresh flowers in the house, fresh cut flowers. I knew at the time that, hell, there was no way I can keep buying fresh flowers out of ONPS money." Silk flowers would have been the best that he could have done, but, with planter boxes outside that the home that should be filled in order to maintain the feel of a home, not a museum, silk flowers would not be sufficient. This observation prompted him to make a proposal to the Junior Service League for a way to support the Truman Home rather than providing tours or holding events at the home: "We set up a fund, and all the profits come back to the home, and they all come back in the form of a floral fund that will provide fresh flowers in the home."¹³⁸ The Junior Service League readily agreed. In February 1985, the park entered

¹³⁵ Ibid.; see also Annual Superintendent's Reports for 1985, 1987, and 1988; files of Harry S Truman NHS; see also Acting Superintendent, Harry S Truman to Chelsey H. Moroz, ENPMA, July 17, 1986; Superintendent, Harry S Truman to Kay Boolos, ENPMA, January 20, 1988; files of Harry S Truman NHS, D62. See also Ronald Mack to George Minnucci, President, ENPMA, August 22, 1994; files of Harry S Truman NHS, A42.

¹³⁶ See Shirley Graff, President, Junior Service League of Independence to Tom Richter, August 11, 1983, with a background sheet on the history and activities of the League; files of Harry S Truman NHS.

¹³⁷ Norm Reigle, oral history interview, December 13, 1985.

¹³⁸ Ibid.

into a formal, five-year agreement with the Junior Service League under which the League agreed to administer the Bess Wallace Truman Memorial Floral Fund, the purpose of which was to provide and deliver fresh flowers to the Truman Home, both for interior use and in the outside planter boxes. The flowers continued to be delivered weekly, with renewed agreement between the park and the League in 1997 and 2002. In 2002, the agreement was changed to include only special-occasion floral arrangements for the Truman birthdays and wedding anniversary, Christmas floral arrangements and summertime porch planter boxes. Weekly Dining Room table arrangements were replaced with seasonal silk arrangements due to cost and concern about the introduction of insects into the Truman Home. As described in Chapter 9, the Junior Service League also agreed to another volunteer effort: coordinating the reservations for evening tours during the first summer of operation, open primarily to residents of Independence to allow them to bypass the crush of tourists who absorbed nearly all of the daily tour reservations

Interpretation

Richter's background prior to arriving in Independence had been interpretation, serving previously as the Supervisory Interpreter at Jefferson National Expansion Memorial. He began considering the interpretation needs of the home from his first meeting with Regional Director Dunning in January 1983 and continued to play a key role in development of an interpretive program while providing temporary management of the site. Once Norman Reigle was hired as the first Superintendent, Richter was appointed Chief Ranger; on January 22, 1984 Richter's position was changed to Chief of Interpretation and Visitor Services.

From the time of Andy Ketterson's first tour of the home in November 1982, it was clear to NPS personnel that the Truman Home provided a rare opportunity for an interpretation that would allow visitors to experience the private side of the president and his family. The method of interpretation, though, whether to provide guided tours for limited groups or allow visitors to move through at their own pace with stationary Rangers providing interpretation at designated locations, took several months to decide. Richter advocated for guided tours, pointing out that the rooms were too small, with furnishings too readily at hand, to allow for the more open-ended approach of self-guided tours. In addition, discussions with Margaret Truman Daniel in the spring and summer of 1983 made clear her unease with visitation and, thus, the need to provide a more controlled experience. After his arrival in November 1983, Superintendent Reigle agreed with the guided tour approach.¹³⁹ Group sizes for tours, when first contemplated, were projected at a maximum of twenty, though that number was eventually reduced in size to the present limit of eight. A more detailed discussion of the origins of the tour and its size is presented in Chapter 10.

Richter took several initial steps in the spring and summer of 1983 to plan for the site's interpretation, including conducting test tours with staff from the Truman Library

¹³⁹ Tom Richter, oral history interview, August 27, 1990.

and the Independence Truman Centennial Commission. The purpose of these tours was to gauge the appropriate size for tour groups and to explore interpretive themes. Richter also visited other NPS sites to assess their operations and to develop interpretive themes and options, and he took part in a joint seasonal training program at Fort Scott in early June. A symposium in August 1983, jointly sponsored by NPS and the Truman Library with participation from MWRO personnel including Historian Ron Cockrell, and Dr. Francis Heller from the University of Kansas, also provided interpretive planning assistance.¹⁴⁰

These early steps toward interpretation of the Truman Home were consolidated in an *Interim Interpretive Prospectus* developed in 1983. The Midwest Regional Office coordinated planning for this document with staff from Harpers Ferry Center beginning in the summer of 1983. A planning team from HFC consisting of Assistant Manager Al Swift, Chief of the Branch of Interpretive Planning Allen Kent, and Chief of the Branch of Historic Furnishings Sarah Olson, together with Richter, Ketterson, and Regional Chief of the Division of Interpretation Jim Schaack. The planning team met in Independence on July 10-13, 1983, and included visits with staff from the Truman Library, civic and municipal officials, and representatives of local history organizations.¹⁴¹ Following this initial meeting, staff from HFC provided Richter with guidance on creating the *Interim Interpretive Prospectus*, which included information on the Trumans and their families as well as logistical guidance on ticket distribution, transportation, size of the group, and the route of the tour.¹⁴²

Regional Chief of Interpretation Jim Schaack provided a “rough, oh so rough, draft” of the *Interim Interpretive Prospectus* to the planning team in early September 1983. The draft included basic information on the site’s establishment as a National Park System unit, its relationship to the NHL district in Independence, and the restrictions on the use of the home from the terms of Mrs. Truman’s will. As proposed by Schaack, the primary emphasis of the interpretive program was the commonality of the Truman’s existence in Independence and the home as the setting for the personal, intimate, and family side of Truman as contrasted with his role as president of the United States. Because the home was left in “a very as is, where is, condition” from the time of Bess Wallace Truman’s death, the principal period of interpretation, the draft proposed, should focus on the later period of their lives. At the same time, “the period provides the most effective means of involving the visitor, providing the ‘bridge’ to span the present with any of the Truman history past.” Logistically, tours were to be restricted by a reservation system, with the size of the tour groups set at a preferred maximum of twelve. The route of the tour through the home had been suggested by Margaret Truman Daniel, but the planning team modified it slightly “to improve protection of personal objects on exhibit and to provide safer and expeditious movement of visitors.”¹⁴³

¹⁴⁰ Annual Superintendent’s Report for 1983.

¹⁴¹ Memorandum, Acting Regional Director, MWRO to Manager, HFC, July 5, 1983; files of Harry S Truman NHS, L58 (MWR-MI).

¹⁴² Memorandum, Deputy Manager, HFC to Regional Director, MWRO, July 20, 1983; files of Harry S Truman NHS, A40.

¹⁴³ Mrs. Daniel was invited to advise NPS on the route of the tour in a letter from Randall R. Pope, Acting Regional Director, June 29, 1983; files of Harry S Truman NHS, L58 (MWR-PC). According to Norm

Early interpretive planners for the Truman Home realized that staging of tours should take place away from the home in order to minimize impact on the neighborhood, with visitors transported to the home by shuttle bus. The Truman Library was the obvious early choice for this staging, though other locations could be considered. The interim prospectus also described the other Truman-related sites in Independence that could help to create a more complete picture of his life, and outlined possibilities for staffing and supporting exhibits and audio-visual materials. Finally, the Interim Interpretive Prospectus identified the studies needed to help with creating a full interpretive plan, including the Historic Structures Report, the Historic Furnishings Report, and a historic yard and grounds survey with a landscape maintenance plan.¹⁴⁴ Following a review by staff at MWRO, HFC, and the park, the Interim Interpretive Prospectus was approved by Regional Director Charles Odegaard on April 3, 1984.¹⁴⁵

In a 1985 interview, Superintendent Norm Reigle discussed the possibility of having volunteers serve as guides in the Truman Home rather than paid Park Rangers. In his view, because of the intense visibility of the home and its preparation for the public opening, there was great interest in taking part, and securing volunteers would have been relatively easy. In addition, the budget situation was challenging: the park initially had few full-time positions allotted to it, and the opportunities for revising the budget before the May 1984 opening were slim. Reigle opted away from this route, however, for several reasons. Among them, he recalled, was not wanting “to set ourselves up where we had a volunteer clique. Be it the Junior Service League or anybody, we didn’t want to have a little clique, where if we were using volunteers we were screening them and we were giving exclusive rights to a volunteer program to a specific organization. Bad business, bad politics.” In addition, Reigle was aware that the City of Independence had hopes of establishing a volunteer program associated with the Truman Centennial, and Reigle was aware that “If we go into competition with the City of Independence for volunteers, write off your [the City’s] volunteer program. We are not going to have any trouble getting volunteers to lead tours through the Truman home. They’re going to come flocking to lead tours through the Truman home, and I can see the Vaile Mansion and the Bingham-Waggoner going down the tubes.” Instead, Reigle proposed to have the National Park Service staging facility in a city facility downtown, and use city volunteers to dispense tickets. This would keep volunteers available for other facilities in the city, and thus help to support the city’s tourism program.¹⁴⁶

As discussed earlier, Reigle and Sanders traveled to MWRO in Omaha in early January to make the case for adding full-time personnel, including interpretive staff. They were successful, and, in late March and early April 1984, Reigle began hiring both

Reigle, many of the decisions regarding the tour route were made during a meeting with Mrs. Daniel in November 1983; see Reigle’s oral history interview, December 13, 1985, p. 28.

¹⁴⁴ Harry S Truman National Historic Site, Independence, Missouri: Interim Interpretive Prospective; draft report attached to Memorandum, Chief of Interpretation, MWRO to Planning Team members Swift, Kent, Olson, Richter, September 2, 1983; files of Harry S Truman NHS.

¹⁴⁵ A final copy of the Interim Interpretive Prospective is located in the collection of files provided by former Superintendent Larry Villalva, Harry S Truman NHS.

¹⁴⁶ Norm Reigle, oral history interview, December 13, 1985, pp. 10, 36.

temporary and permanent interpretive staff. Rick Jones and Cindy Ott were selected for permanent Park Technician positions on March 23, 1984, both from Lava Beds National Monument in California. Other interpretive staff who entered on duty on April 15, 1984, included Palma Wilson-Buell as Lead Park Technician, who transferred from Ozark Scenic National Riverways in Missouri; and John Whitfield (formerly at Lincoln Home NHS), Jody Adkins (formerly at Lincoln Home NHS and Jefferson National Expansion Memorial), Karen Tinnin (formerly at Jefferson National Expansion Memorial), and Linda Joseph as seasonal Park Technicians.¹⁴⁷ The new interpretive staff were provided training in April 1984, prior to the home's opening, with several local historians and Research Historian Ron Cockrell from MWRO presenting programs. The new staff also had a chance to visit with neighbors and family members who were personally acquainted with the Trumans, including May Wallace, Ardis Haukenberry, and Sue Gentry. The interpretive staff presented sample tours to regional office personnel on April 25, 1984, and to volunteer staff at city sites in May. The site then opened for tours to the public on May 15, 1984, as a part of the public commemoration of Harry S Truman's 100th birthday.¹⁴⁸

By the time of its opening in 1984, the Truman Home already had an established presence in Independence. While simply becoming operationally functional in May 1984, barely one and one-half years after Bess Truman's death, was a tremendous achievement, NPS still had a long way to go before the site was a fully functioning unit of the National Park System. Historic homes that come into the National Park System normally take several years to open, giving NPS staff the time to prepare the building and to develop the plans that will sustain the site into the future. Superintendent Reigle and his staff, with the support of research, restoration, and administrative staff at MWRO and HFC, still had to conduct a great deal of research and planning in order to provide more complete protection for the artifacts, more fully inform the tours, manage the maintenance and rehabilitation of the Truman Home, establish its relationship to the surrounding neighborhood, and guide its management for the future. It was a tall order, and took several years to complete. The following chapter provides a look at the park's early planning efforts.

¹⁴⁷ "All for the Love of Harry"—notes prepared by Administrative Technician Joan Sanders, June 1984; files of Harry S Truman NHS, H14.

¹⁴⁸ Superintendent's Annual Report for 1984.

Chapter 4: Initial Studies

As discussed in Chapter 3, MWRO and the initial staff at Harry S Truman NHS worked through 1983 and early 1984 to lay the groundwork for the new park. Many of the original staff were drawn to work at the site because of the opportunities to play a role in the foundation of a brand-new historic site, to be “present at the creation,” in the phrase popularized by Truman’s Secretary of State, Dean Acheson. Former Administrative Assistant Joan Sanders, referring to the other initial staff who, like herself, made lateral moves within NPS to come to Harry S Truman NHS, said “I think they all felt the same way I did. How many chances in your lifetime to you get to start a new park?”¹⁴⁹ Ranger-in-Charge Tom Richter, followed soon by the inaugural Superintendent Norm Reigle, established the policies, conceptual approaches, and staffing that set the patterns for the site’s on-going management. These administrative concerns were underlain by a series of studies and planning documents that provided content and direction which, in turn, allowed the Harry S Truman NHS staff to provide the best care for the home and its furnishings and to provide a well-informed interpretive experience to the site’s many visitors.

Research and Documentation: Historic American Buildings Survey/Historic Structures Report

After Tom Richter was installed as Ranger-in-Charge in early 1983, NPS began several initiatives to document the house, its history, and its contents. One of the most important features of the Truman Home, noted by nearly all visitors from the first visit by MWRO Chief of Cultural Resources Andy Ketterson to the present, is the completeness of the interior furnishings and the resulting feeling that the Trumans had stepped out just moments before. The Trumans inherited many items from their respective families, acquired many items on their own, and received many gifts during and after Harry’s time in the Senate and as president. The flow of furnishings and household goods was one way only, however, because the Trumans rarely threw out anything they acquired. The home was, therefore, filled chock-a-block with objects large and small, in storage areas and in living areas. Recognizing the value of retaining the Trumans’ approach to living in their home, which they shared only with a very small selection of close friends and family, NPS staff from the earliest days sought to protect the interior in its original, intact state. This involved both security and curatorial concerns because so many items were housed in relatively small rooms. One of the first steps was to have the Truman Home documented by Jack Boucher, lead photographer for the NPS Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS). Boucher conducted an intensive photographic documentation of the home in late February 1983. The following month he completed a package of 125 densely-detailed large-format (5x7) photographs that included twenty-one exterior views

¹⁴⁹ Joan Sanders, oral history interview, August 28, 1990.

and 104 interior views.¹⁵⁰ Boucher's photographs, together with an informal set of photographs taken by Andy Ketterson during his first visit to the home, provided invaluable evidence for future curators and managers as to the condition of the house and the arrangement of the rooms and their contents soon after NPS assumed responsibility. Also, HFC Cinematographer Tom Grey filmed both floors of the interior of the Truman Home to document existing conditions and to supplement the photographs.

Boucher's photographic documentation, together with Ketterson's informal photographs and Grey's film, provided a visual baseline for the physical condition of the home only five months after Mrs. Truman died but did not provide the depth of information that would be needed for the home's curatorial and interpretive planning. One early decision which helped to lay a more solid foundation for care and interpretation of the Harry S Truman Home was to develop a Historic Structure Report (HSR) for the site. In his testimony before Congress in February 1983, Director of NPS Russell Dickenson stated that NPS would prepare an HSR for the home at an early date. Fortunately, MWRO had recently hired a seasonal historian in the Cultural Resources division, Ron Cockrell, a recent MA graduate of Creighton University (Figure 22). A native of Independence, Cockrell wrote his MA thesis on the Truman Administration's foreign policy, particularly toward Iran in the early 1950s. Having conducted much of his research at the Truman Library, Cockrell was familiar with many of the resources available there.¹⁵¹ In April 1983, following the NPS Director's Congressional testimony, Regional Director J.L. Dunning informed Associate Director for Cultural Resources F. Ross Holland in Washington, D.C., that MWRO had the capability to complete the historical narrative portion of the HSR in-house.¹⁵² In response, Holland acknowledged that the architectural portion of the HSR would "have to be programmed and accomplished with Cultural Resource Preservation funds. In view of the significance of the Truman Home," he concluded, "this project will command the highest national priority."¹⁵³

Cockrell, who was then still a part-time employee while also working at Creighton University, made an initial scoping trip to Independence in late April 1983 and prepared a Task Directive the following month. In the Task Directive, he stated that the purpose of the document would be to develop in-depth, concentrated research on the property for the first time, which would inform the preservation of the home. His initial scoping trip revealed that, although the home was remarkably intact with its furnishings from when the Trumans lived there, supporting research materials about the home, its renovations over the years, its furnishings, and how the Trumans lived and entertained there were scant. This was a result of the Trumans' vaunted privacy despite being public

¹⁵⁰ All photographs taken by Jack Boucher for the HABS documentation in 1983 are available on the Library of Congress website: <http://www.loc.gov/pictures/collection/hh/item/mo0415/>. See also Charles Burke, "Federal photographer captures Truman family's 'style of life,'" *Examiner* (Independence, Missouri), February 26, 1983, p. 1; clipping in files of Harry S Truman NHS.

¹⁵¹ Cockrell interview, December 18, 2015.

¹⁵² Memorandum, Regional Director, Midwest Region to Associate Director, Cultural Resources Management, WASO, April 26, 1983; Midwest Region Cultural Resources Archive, L58 (MWR-PC).

¹⁵³ Memorandum, Acting Associate Director, Cultural Resources to Regional Director, Midwest Regional Office, date faded; files of Harry S Truman NHS, L58 (418).



Figure 22. Historian Ron Cockrell, 1984. Photo provided by Harry S Truman NHS.

figures; Truman Library Director Ben Zobrist explained to Cockrell that personnel from the Truman Library “were extremely reluctant to invade the Truman’s [sic] privacy at their home.” The only substantial source for information on the Trumans’ lives within their home, Cockrell concluded, would be oral history. Identifying several potential oral history interview subjects, Cockrell noted that “Personal interviews with these individuals are considered crucial to the final research product.”¹⁵⁴

Cockrell became a full-time temporary employee at MWRO in the spring of 1983 and began research for the HSR in June at repositories such as the Truman Library, Jackson County Historical Society and Courthouse, Independence Heritage Commission, and local libraries. He also began conducting the first of many oral history interviews, laying the groundwork for a process of documenting the site that has survived to the present and which has informed this Administrative History. Knowing that the U.S. Secret Service had been actively involved with the home during Truman’s years as president and again from the mid-1960s until Mrs. Truman’s death in 1982, Cockrell also received permission to conduct research at Secret Service headquarters in Washington, D.C. Unfortunately, he found that the files from Truman’s presidential years had been destroyed, including information about the security booth built by the Secret Service next to the carriage house. However, records for the second phase of Secret Service protection,

¹⁵⁴ Ron Cockrell, “A Task Directive: Historic Structure Report: History and Significance, Harry S. Truman National Historic Site, Independence, Missouri,” May 12, 1983; files of Harry S Truman NHS. See also Trip Report by Ron Cockrell, May 26, 1983; files of Harry S Truman NHS, L58.

from 1965 to 1982 had been preserved and provided information on modifications that the Secret Service had made at the home and in the security booth on the grounds.¹⁵⁵

In July 1983, Acting Regional Director Randall R. Pope, who succeeded J.L. Dunning, wrote to Margaret Truman Daniel with a request that she provide information about the home by means of an interview, to which she replied promptly and affirmatively. In his response later that month, he stated that a review draft of the HSR historical section would be available in September 1983 and suggested that it “would be best to have you read this just before you come to Independence. Ron Cockrell, the researcher, could interview you in the home and the results of the interview would be incorporated in his study.” It would be most effective, he suggested, “if you were present in the house in Independence during the interview. In this situation, you could walk from room to room discussing the significance and pertinent background data of the property.”¹⁵⁶ This was a golden opportunity, the first chance to interview the person with the most intimate knowledge of Harry and Bess Truman and their home other than the couple themselves.¹⁵⁷

The much-anticipated oral history interview took place in the Truman Home living room on November 17, 1983. The interview took three hours to complete and had few people in attendance—Cockrell conducting the interview, with Norm Reigle, who had recently been appointed as the first Superintendent of the Harry S Truman NHS, and Sarah Olson, Chief of the Branch of Historic Furnishings at HFC who was then working on a historic furnishings plan for the home. The interview went smoothly, as Cockrell recalled, with Mrs. Daniel being “very gracious, very forthcoming, had a keen sense of humor.” The fact that both Cockrell and Mrs. Daniel had grown up in Independence quickly helped to establish a rapport that made for a successful interview. In the interview, Mrs. Daniel covered a wide range of topics pertaining to the home and its furnishings, her memories of her extended family, including grandparents, great-grandparents, and her two uncles and their wives who lived next door, her childhood growing up in the neighborhood, the family’s relationship with Vietta Garr, the Truman family’s cook for forty years, and Mrs. Truman’s relationship with the Secret Service near the end of her life.¹⁵⁸

While preparing the HSR, Cockrell conducted many other interviews with relatives, friends, and neighbors of Harry and Bess Truman, including Bess Truman’s sister-in-law, May Wallace, who lived in the house immediately to the rear of the Truman’s home. Cockrell completed a draft of the HSR in the fall of 1983, and the final document was approved in March 1984. Cockrell’s historical narrative covers the early

¹⁵⁵Cockrell, “CRM’s Mobilize to Activate Harry S Truman NHS.” See also Randall R. Pope, Acting Regional Director, to Hugh Ward, U.S. Secret Service, July 28, 1983; Midwest Region Cultural Resources Archive, L58 (MWR-PC). Cockrell became full-time permanent staff in March 1984.

¹⁵⁶ Randall R. Pope, Acting Regional Director, to Margaret Truman Daniel, July 21, 1983; files of Harry S Truman NHS.

¹⁵⁷ In his handwritten comments on Ron Cockrell’s draft history of the site’s initial implementation, Richter noted that Mr. Truman was too ill to accommodate requests for an interview in 1971 when the NHL Historic District nomination was being prepared.

¹⁵⁸ Cockrell, oral history interview, December 18, 2015.

history of Independence and the lot where the home was built, Mrs. Truman's family history, beginning with their arrival in Independence in the 1860s, and the construction of the home in several stages. The narrative then focuses on Harry Truman's arrival in Independence as a boy, his early meeting with Bess as a child and their later courtship and marriage after Harry returned from WWI. Following this information on Harry's and Bess' early years, the bulk of the narrative covers the Trumans during their married lives, both in Independence and in Washington, D.C. The final four chapters then provide extensive details about the home after the Trumans returned to it from Washington, including several modernization and maintenance projects, infrastructure upgrades such as water and fuel systems, the other buildings and structures on the lot including the carriage house and pergola, and the Secret Service's role at the home in the 1960s and 1970s.

As many have noted subsequently, Cockrell's historical narrative portion of the HSR was the first to document the very private lives of the Trumans. It is a substantial document based on extensive research, both archival and oral historical, and has provided the foundation for nearly all subsequent research efforts by those within and those outside NPS, pertaining to Harry and Bess Truman, their respective family histories, and their lives in Independence. Importantly, the HSR provided the basis for development of an interpretive program at the Harry S Truman NHS as the site neared its public opening in May 1984.

In the fall of 1983, the site's budget had an unexpected surplus which allowed MWRO to also begin work on the architectural section of the HSR. Ketterson, working with Regional Historical Architect Fran Krupka, developed a scope of work that included existing condition drawings as the initial stage. The Midwest Regional Office selected the firm of Solomon, Claybaugh, and Young of Kansas City to do the work, which began with a post-award meeting on October 13, 1983. Shortly thereafter, the architects set up a drafting table in the basement of the Truman Home for use in preparing the drawings of existing building conditions.¹⁵⁹ Following completion of these initial drawings, the firm continued with extensive and detailed architectural studies of the home and all its architectural components, a process that required several years. As Cockrell had demonstrated through his research in document repositories, the home had been expanded on several occasions, though the specific chronology could not be determined solely through archival means. The detailed architectural investigations conducted by Solomon, Claybaugh, and Young provided better evidence for the complex construction history of the home and its various components. A 90-percent submittal meeting was held in September 1986, with the final HSR completed in July 1987.¹⁶⁰

¹⁵⁹ Annual Superintendent's Report for 1983.

¹⁶⁰ Memorandum, Historical Architect and Research Historian, MWRO to Associate Regional Director, Planning and Resource Preservation, MWRO, September 8, 1986; Midwest Region Cultural Resources Archive, H3015 (MWR-PC). See also Memorandum, Associate Regional Director, Planning and Resource Preservation, MWRO to Superintendent, Harry S Truman NHS; files of Harry S Truman NHS, H3019 (MWR-PC).

As Cockrell was completing the draft of the historical portion of the HSR in 1984, he was tapped to begin work on a Historic Resource Study (HRS) for the Harry S Truman NHS. The purpose of the HRS was to provide historical information about the Trumans oriented more toward interpretation of their lives than the architectural documentation that was the focus of the HSR. Cockrell prepared a Task Directive for the HRS in early 1984, which was reviewed favorably by Chief Historian Ed Bearss in NPS's Washington, D.C., office. It was approved by Associate Director for Cultural Resources Jerry L. Rogers on March 1.¹⁶¹ As Cockrell described later, the HRS “really expounded more on the Truman family story and all of their shirt-tail relatives and focused on the house in Independence as the Summer White House, as the home where they retired to, where they did a modernization project in the 1950s into the 1960s to make it more comfortable and more to their tastes versus the past generations.” Cockrell used his personal connections with editors at the *Kansas City Star*, where he had worked for one year prior to attending graduate school, to access its extensive library, normally off-limits to researchers. There, he researched all Truman-related clippings files of past news articles written by journalists of both the *Kansas City Times* (morning) and the *Kansas City Star* (evening) newspapers. Cockrell also collaborated with Historical Architect Al O’Bright in the preparation of a National Register of Historic Places nomination for the home; this nomination is included as an appendix to the HRS.¹⁶²

During development of the HRS in the summer of 1984, with the HSR just completed, Cockrell met with staff at the Truman Home in Independence. The ostensible purpose was to deliver bound copies of the HSR to the park and to conduct additional research for the National Register nomination. While there, Cockrell met with Seasonal Historian Jim Williams, then a history major at Westminster College in Fulton, Missouri (Figure 23). Williams, a native of south Kansas City, knew of the Trumans from the farm in Grandview near where Williams grew up. Hearing that NPS planned to create a historic site at the Truman Home in Independence, Williams wrote to the Superintendent in late 1983 requesting an internship. Superintendent Reigle agreed, and Williams started in May immediately after the Truman Home dedication ceremony. He began conducting research at the Truman Home, particularly on the home’s furnishings, the results of which Cockrell reviewed during his visit. As Cockrell noted at the time, “I was very impressed at the volume and quality of historical data this talented young man gathered from city and county archives, various library holdings of historical newspapers on microfilm, and cemetery records.” Williams’ research, moreover, “will serve as a foundation for future in-park historical research.”¹⁶³

After noting that he intended to incorporate Williams’ research into the HRS, Cockrell went on to point to Williams’ work as demonstrating “a serious need for a research historian at Harry S Truman NHS. Not only would a historian be helpful in the

¹⁶¹ Memorandum, Associate Director, WASO to Regional Director, MWRO, March 1, 1984; files of Harry S Truman NHS, D18 HSTR.

¹⁶² Ron Cockrell, oral history interview, December 18, 2015. The nomination included all interior furnishings at the national level of significance as well as the buildings and structures on the site.

¹⁶³ Memorandum, Research Historian, MWRO to Associate Regional Director, Planning and Resource Preservation, MWRO, August 3, 1984; files of Harry S Truman NHS, H22 (MWR-PC).



Figure 23. Intern Jim Williams, center, with Superintendent Norm Reigle (L) and Chief of Cultural Resources Steve Harrison (R), August 1984. Photo provided by Harry S Truman NHS.

curatorial area, but in interpretation as well.” In particular, Cockrell emphasized the importance of continuing an oral history program to expand his pioneering efforts while preparing the HSR. Those who had memories of the Trumans and their home, he noted, were now either elderly or deceased. “If the National Park Service is to meet its legislative mandate to preserve and interpret the Harry S Truman National Historic Site,” he concluded,

it is incumbent on us to recognize the immediate need for an oral history program. This becomes even more vital considering that the proposed master plan calls for the boundaries of the national historic site to expand beyond 219 North Delaware into the adjacent neighborhood. As years pass and attention suddenly turns to ‘those other’ houses, churches, and schools, will our interpretive effort be prepared, or will we have to scurry about to initiate one? I am fearful that we will wait too long and lose a valuable historical resource, one which can only be tapped through an oral history program.¹⁶⁴

Drawing in part on Williams’s research, Cockrell completed a draft of the HRS later in 1984. The final HRS was released in 1985.

¹⁶⁴ Ibid.

Historic Furnishings Report

Curatorial and interpretive staff from the Historic Furnishings Branch at NPS's Harpers Ferry Center in West Virginia met with Richter and MWRO staff beginning in the summer of 1983. The principal purpose was to help MWRO staff and Ranger-in-Charge Richter develop an interpretive plan for the home. HFC staff provided guidance to Richter for development of an interim interpretive plan, part of which was to request a Historic Furnishings Report (HFR). A week later, MWRO approved a Development/Study Package Proposal for the HFR. The purpose of the project, according to the proposal, was to document, assess, and authenticate the home's furnishings in order to create a permanent record of the objects and their locations in the home. The report was to be based on extensive historical research that could support decisions for management, development, and use of the furnishings, and was to provide recommendations for the best environmental conditions to protect the collection.¹⁶⁵

Olson conducted extensive research through the fall and winter of 1983 and into 1984, including using the partial inventory of the Trumans' Home which Truman Library staff prepared in 1981 at the request of Margaret Truman Daniel and the HABS photographs taken in February 1983 by Jack Boucher. Olson also conducted her own interview with Margaret Truman Daniel immediately after Ron Cockrell concluded his in November 1983. As Cockrell recalled of Mrs. Daniel, "it was a long day for her, but she was in her prime. She just really enjoyed talking with us."¹⁶⁶ In contrast to Cockrell's interview, Olson's interview was recorded on videotape which combined visual documentation with Mrs. Daniel's audio commentary.¹⁶⁷ In addition, Olson examined several pre-1983 photographs of interiors of the Truman Home and their several residences in Washington, D.C., film of a tour of the home made in 1955, in which Mrs. Daniel narrated, scattered references pertaining to the interior of the home during the Gates/Wallace years as well as the Truman years, and, finally, Cockrell's extensive historical research for the HSR.

Two issues made completion of the Historic Furnishings Report, as well as the conservation of the furniture, challenging. First, the items in the home had not been formally cataloged. Although Pat Kerr and Elizabeth "Liz" Safly from the Truman Library had compiled a partial inventory of the home in 1981 at the request of Mrs. Daniel, there was no way to verify how complete the inventory had been, the precise location of the furnishings, and their potential role in the home's interpretation. In November 1983, as noted in Chapter 3, Norm Reigle arranged for Curator Susan Kopczynski to be detailed to the Truman Home in large part to begin the process of cataloging the contents, a program which Curator Steve Harrison continued when he began work at there in February 1984. It was a long process, though, given the

¹⁶⁵ 10-238 Form, "Historic Furnishings Report," attached to Memorandum, Ranger-in-Charge, Harry S Truman to Regional Director, Midwest Region, July 18, 1983; files of Harry S Truman NHS, File D275-R. See also Memorandum, Deputy Manager, Harpers Ferry Center to Regional Director, Midwest Region, July 20, 1983; Midwest Region Cultural Resources Archive, K1817 (1100-IP).

¹⁶⁶ Ron Cockrell, oral history interview, December 18, 2015.

¹⁶⁷ Ibid.

disinclination of the Trumans to discard anything. The second challenge for developing the Historic Furnishings Report, as referenced in Chapter 2, was the on-going question of the ownership of all of the artifacts in the home, an issue that remained unresolved into 1984. As Olson predicted in her November 1983 trip report to Independence, “the issue of title to the furnishings will crop up repeatedly, in cataloging, in conservation work, and in the Furnishings Report. All of these processes will occur more smoothly once this question is resolved.”¹⁶⁸

Olson completed a draft of the HFR in the late summer of 1984. In his review of the draft, however, Superintendent Reigle strongly urged a delay in finalizing the HFR and releasing it for distribution. The two challenges facing the entire curatorial program, cataloging the items and their ownership, had not yet been resolved, rendering the HFR incomplete. While the cataloging had largely been completed on the first floor, which was the only one open to the public, the second floor, even those items deemed appropriate for public viewing at some point, remained uncataloged. At least those items that would be visible to the public should be cataloged before releasing the HFR, Reigle urged. He and his staff were beginning to understand the scale of the curatorial burden, though not yet fully: “To date, we have cataloged over 1,200 of the estimated 35,000 objects in the home. We estimate that cataloging visible objects only may take up to two years to complete while the complete cataloging of all objects may require more than ten years.” In addition to the cataloging, Reigle continued, resolution of the ownership of the artifacts must be completed before releasing the final plan:

This issue needs to be resolved between the National Park Service, Margaret Truman Daniel and the Truman Library. In addition we need to address items in the possession of Mrs. Wallace and several other private individuals i.e. Fields Furniture. Since this is a highly sensitive issue with important ramifications for the future, it needs to be addressed at the appropriate time and after several other steps are completed particularly ownership of items at the Library that were removed at the request of Margaret Truman Daniel prior to NPS involvement.¹⁶⁹

Other issues remained to be resolved as well before the HFR could be completed, Reigle concluded. Under the terms of Bess Wallace Truman’s will, only the first floor would be available to the public during Margaret Truman Daniel’s lifetime; there was no proscription against having the second floor open after that time. Although structural defects discovered shortly afterward precluded ever opening the second floor to the public, in the summer of 1984 it remained at least a theoretical possibility. Reigle, therefore, encouraged Olson to address the possibility of furnishing the second floor, especially the Truman Bedroom and the Gates Bedroom. Reigle noted that the Gates Bedroom could be seen from the outside porch once exterior restoration was completed. Reigle also suggested that the period of significance for interpretation of the home had not been fully resolved, particularly in light of potential future expansion of the tour: “the

¹⁶⁸ Ibid. The MOA that defined the ownership of items in the Truman Home in 1986 is detailed in Chapter 9.

¹⁶⁹ Memorandum, Superintendent, Harry S Truman to Regional Director, MWRO, September 25, 1984; files of Harry S Truman NHS, H30.

just-walked-out approach is not currently consistent and will be a greater problem once the second floor and Gates Bedroom are open.” He hoped that the HFR could recommend an approach that allowed flexibility in interpretation should the second floor be opened. Finally, Reigle asked for a recommendation regarding obtaining the items that had already been removed from the home and suggested additional oral history sources.¹⁷⁰

Olson completed the final HFR in late 1986. The HFR drew heavily upon the 1981 inventory, combined with informal photographs of the interior taken by Andy Ketterson in 1982, the HABS photographs taken in February 1983, and additional documentary research including Cockrell’s HSR and HRS. She also identified several photographs of the interior dating to the time the Trumans lived in the home, and drew on photographs of their different residences in Washington, D.C., to develop a sense of their mode of furnishing and arranging their living spaces. Olson noted that, with few exceptions, the interior of the home remained largely as it was when Bess Truman died in October 1982. After their return from Washington, D.C., in 1953, the Trumans significantly redecorated the home to suit their own tastes rather than those of Bess’ family and to incorporate the many furnishings and items that they acquired during their years in Washington from the mid-1930s to 1952. The available evidence, she concluded, made it clear that “the Trumans made remarkably few changes following this redecoration project” in 1953. In her discussion of the Truman Home’s interiors, Olson divided the home into three historical periods: the Gates period, from 1885 to the 1920s; the 1920s through 1953, when the Trumans spent much of their time in Washington, D.C., and Mrs. Truman’s mother served as de facto head of household; and 1953 to 1982, the years after the Trumans left Washington for Independence until Mrs. Truman died. The home as the Trumans left it, Olson noted, showed very little overlap among the periods, as the Trumans removed nearly all the earlier pieces from the living areas and placed them in attic storage. The occasional press observers allowed in the home in the later 1950s, however, all commented on the Victorian appearance of the home despite the changes that they made. “It is safe to say,” Olson concluded, “that all changes to the interiors through the Truman occupancy were conservative ones.”¹⁷¹

After introductory materials that include a summary of the three periods of the home’s occupancy, the HFR is organized on a room-by-room basis, primarily with catalog entries. At the conclusion of the inventory section, however, HFC Staff Curator Diana Pardue prepared extensive recommendations regarding the care and treatment of the furnishings, including information on maintaining proper environmental conditions such as temperature, lighting, and humidity; protection against insects, dust, and fire; provisions for security; and a range of maintenance and housekeeping procedures, including recommended cleaning schedules. The HFR then included reproductions of an extensive series of historic photographs of the Truman family in their home together with the complete set of large-format photographs taken by Jack Boucher for HABS in February 1983. The HFR then concluded with copies of many of the official records pertaining to the home, such as probate records, invoices for work performed at the home

¹⁷⁰ Ibid.

¹⁷¹ Sarah M. Olson, *Historic Furnishings Report: Harry S Truman Home, Harry S Truman National Historic Site, Independence, Missouri* (Harpers Ferry Center, National Park Service, 1986), 15

and for items that the Trumans purchased, and the inventory prepared by Truman Library staff in 1981-82.

General Management Plan

All units of the National Park System are required to have a General Management Plan (GMP). These are lengthy planning documents that require extensive and extended effort to complete. Before a GMP could be developed for the Truman Home, MWRO coordinated with Ranger-in-Charge Richter on development of a Statement for Management (SFM). MWRO Park Planner David Given and Tom Richter worked together over several days in Independence to prepare a draft Statement for Management. The draft document then was reviewed by regional office staff and local officials. In the absence of detailed information about the site, the SFM was general in nature, simply stating needs and potential directions. It began with the legislative origins of the site and related laws and regulations, together with excerpts from Mrs. Truman's will. The SFM then provided basic information on the site's resources, including the home, carriage house, and steel fence, and the general needs including historical information, emergency and near-term maintenance issues, a catalog of furnishings, and security measures. After suggesting that attendance figures from the Truman Library might help make projections for visitation once the home was open, the SFM concluded by outlining the major issues that needed to be addressed. These included research into the home's construction, occupancy, furnishings, and landscaping, and planning for the site's overall management. The management objectives as defined in the SFM were preserving and protecting the site, including its structural stability, care and maintenance of the furnishings, and landscape maintenance. A key component of the management objectives was visitor use and interpretive planning. Provisions for handicapped access would need to be developed. The SFM identified several potential themes for interpretation, suggesting the Truman family life as reflected in the home and the role of the home during the Truman presidency were the most important. Secondary themes could include the Trumans' relationship to the City of Independence, Harry's and Bess's backgrounds before they were married, and the evolution of the home and the grounds. The SFM emphasized the importance of establishing cooperative relationships with Mrs. Daniel, the Truman Library, and the City of Independence, and identified administrative needs including adequate staffing, security, and administrative office space.¹⁷²

The key planning component of the SFM came in the appendix with the Outline of Planning Requirements. This prioritized list of planning actions was authorized separately from the main body of the SFM in February 1984. It identified as the two top priorities the need for a collection preservation guide to ensure proper care of historic objects and a maintenance operation guide to allow routine maintenance to be contracted. A secondary priority was completion of a GMP, while third-level priorities included the

¹⁷² "Statement for Management: Harry S Truman National Historic Site," approved November 8, 1983; files of Harry S Truman NHS, D18 (MWR-PQ). See also review comments by Tom Richter (July 17, 1983) and Barbara J. Potts, Mayor of Independence (July 16, 1983), files of Harry S Truman NHS, D18.

HFR, a *Historic Grounds Report*, an interpretive prospectus, and a handicapped access plan. Fourth-level priorities were a historic structure preservation guide, a safety plan for visitors and staff, and a signage plan to identify the site for area visitors.¹⁷³

Initial plans to develop the GMP were being made while preparation of the SFM, and particularly the Outline of Planning Requirements, were still in progress. Midwest Regional Office Park Planner David Given prepared and submitted a Development/Study Package Proposal for the GMP on September 7, 1983, explaining the need to move past the initial SFM and develop a long-term management plan for the site. In the absence of a GMP, Given warned, “the site will be forced to operate on the basis of hurriedly prepared, inadequately coordinated interim plans.”¹⁷⁴ The Midwest Regional Office received approval to proceed with the GMP in the fall of 1983. The planning team was led from the Denver Service Center (DSC), with staff from MWRO and Harry S Truman NHS staff as key participants. The Task Directive, which was issued in early January 1984, identified the key issues as cultural resources management, visitor use and interpretation, operations and security, general development and administration, and the surrounding environment. This last topic included protecting the historic setting and neighborhood through potential boundary adjustments, acquisition, zoning, and cooperative agreements, which emerged as the most controversial issue. The team was led by Allen Hagood from DSC, with Regional Park Planner David Given, Superintendent Norm Reigle, and Chief Ranger Tom Richter on the team along with socioeconomic, environmental, historical, landscape, and transportation specialists from DSC. A range of consultants included Jill York and Ron Cockrell as MWRO historians, other DSC and MWRO compliance and planning staff, Curator Susan Kopczykynski, and representatives from the City of Independence, the Jackson County Historical Society, the Truman Library, the Missouri State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP). As initially conceived, the GMP would be finalized by September 30, 1985, nearly two years from its inception.¹⁷⁵

The planning team held an initial visit and data gathering trip in Independence on January 16-20, 1984. According to a report from Regional Park Planner David Given, the team recognized the potential for conflicts in planning needs and scheduling between the public opening in May 1984 and the GMP. As Given recommended in his trip report, the first priority should be opening of the site. As a result, the team discussed a minimum two-month delay in their proposed schedule for draft submittals.¹⁷⁶ Despite the challenge of working around the feverish planning for the site’s opening, the planning team got to

¹⁷³ The Outline of Planning Requirements is attached as the final appendix to the Statement for Management, cited above, and was approved by Superintendent Norm Reigle and Regional Director Charles Odegaard on February 14, 1984 and February 17, 1984, respectively.

¹⁷⁴ Development/Study Package Proposal, Form 10-238, General Management Plan for Harry S Truman, September 7, 1983; files of Harry S Truman NHS.

¹⁷⁵ Task Directive: General Management Plan, Package No. 102, Harry S. Truman National Historic Site, January 1984 [the document is mislabeled as January 1983]; files of Harry S Truman NHS, D18.

¹⁷⁶ Trip Report, Park Planner, MWRO to Associate Regional Director, Planning and Resource Preservation, MWRO, February 10, 1984; files of Harry S Truman NHS, D18. See also the proposed revised schedule in Memorandum, Assistant Manager, Midwest/Rocky Mountain Team, DSC to Regional Director, MWRO, February 6, 1984; files of Harry S Truman NHS, D18.

work quickly and, in March 1984, released the draft alternatives document for public and NPS review. The document presented four alternatives, three of which included expanding the boundaries of the NHS beyond the existing Truman Home lot. The first of the four, Alternative 1, was the most conservative, providing for NPS interpretation and administration of only the 0.77-acre lot, with a shuttle service provided by the City of Independence bringing visitors to the home. At the same time, Alternative 1 recognized the need to establish a measure of protection for the surrounding neighborhood, though it proposed doing so through cooperative agreements with the city and providing technical assistance to property owners in the NHL Historic District and the City of Independence's Harry S. Truman Heritage District. The only acquisition proposed in Alternative 1 was a building to be used for site support, including restrooms and first aid, within one block of the Truman Home.¹⁷⁷

The remaining three alternatives were clearly more expansionist, and were tied to potential and actual threats to the integrity of the surrounding NHL Historic District. The catalyst for these threats came principally from the First Baptist Church, which occupies several lots on West Truman Road approximately one and one-half blocks east of the Truman Home, within the NHL District. As Superintendent Reigle recalled, when the GMP was nearing completion in late 1985,

at the time I arrived there was a very strong controversy raging over expansion plans of the First Baptist Church. That had started prior to my arrival and was in full gear by the time I walked in the front door. Battle lines were drawn, the sides were split, it was pretty much of a no-win situation. The First Baptist Church wanted to expand. The neighborhood residents, and the preservation community, especially those not aligned with First Baptist Church, were solidly against any expansion by the church.¹⁷⁸

Tom Richter especially recalled that at a rather tumultuous Independence City Council meeting to consider re-drawing the city's historic district to exclude all First Baptist Church property, neighbors testified their opposition to the church removing older houses in the district for parking purposes, but they were not opposed to the building of the sanctuary itself.

At the same time, Ron Cockrell's research had already indicated the intimate connection between the Truman Home and three nearby homes: the two homes immediately behind it on West Truman Road that had belonged to Bess Truman's two brothers and their wives, and the former Noland Home across North Delaware from which Harry Truman had courted Bess Wallace. Recognizing the need to retain this buffer of family homes immediately surrounding the Truman Home, Reigle pushed for an expansionist agenda that would allow NPS to protect and maintain them. As he recalled in 1989, "there was a lot of internal in-fighting early on on getting any kind of boundary

¹⁷⁷ "Alternatives Document for Public Response: Harry S Truman National Historic Site, Independence, Missouri," March 1984; files of Harry S Truman NHS.

¹⁷⁸ Norm Reigle, oral history interview, December 13, 1985. A more complete discussion of the local political discussions surrounding the local heritage district and its constriction is presented in Chapter 8.

expansion, and so it was a big fight from the beginning to get an approved General Management Plan which said yes, we would seek legislation. That was the first battle, and probably the hardest battle. The hardest battle was getting it into the General Management Plan in the first place, that we wanted three additional houses and we wanted it for this purpose.” Reigle recalled that he had to convince the Regional Director at MWRO, who then had to convince the NPS Director in Washington, D.C. The concerns were two-fold. Once the new properties were added to the NHS, they would have to be maintained in perpetuity, at potentially great cost. Additionally, any of the proposed expansions outlined in Alternatives 2, 3, and 4 would require legislative action which, in turn, required action by the Washington Office of NPS.¹⁷⁹ It was unclear at the time whether the Washington Office would support such legislation.

Alternative 2 included fee simple acquisition of nearby properties that were most directly related to the Truman story. At least one of these could be used for site support, and NPS would acquire the other properties for administrative offices and other needs. This alternative also recommended the acquisition of preservation easements for properties within the NHL Historic District. Alternative 3 proposed an even larger boundary for the NHS, acquiring in fee simple four homes on the west side of North Delaware, two homes to the south of the Truman Home on West Maple Street, the two Wallace homes on the south side of Truman Road and one house on the north side of Truman Road. Other protection measures, including easements and first right of refusal, would be applied for other properties that surrounded these fee simple acquisition properties. Finally, Alternative 4 proposed to expand the Harry S Truman NHS boundary so that it coincided with the National Historic Landmark Historic District, with protection measures that included the acquisition of properties as in Alternative 3.¹⁸⁰

The public and agency review process took place in the spring and summer of 1984 as the Truman Home finalized its plans for public opening. Initial “town-hall” style public meetings were held April 3-6, 1984, in Independence and Kansas City. In his report on the meetings, Given noted that attendance was small, with only two people coming to the meetings in Kansas City and thirty to the Independence meetings. The reception seemed generally cordial, although the public had questions about the various site protection alternatives and about access and circulation, interpretation, among others. As he observed, “The ‘Federal Government get out’ feeling that has been prevalent in some of our new areas in the last decade was conspicuously absent.”¹⁸¹ During internal reviews over the spring, and in response to comments from MWRO planning staff and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP), the planning team began to refine its alternatives by clarifying and quantifying many assumptions made in the initial review draft. In June 1984, the planning team prepared a tentative preferred alternative statement which drew largely from Alternative 2, calling for acquisition of three to five properties in fee simple, presumably including the Wallace and Noland homes, with an

¹⁷⁹ Norm Reigle, oral history interview, November 20, 1989.

¹⁸⁰ “Alternatives Document for Public Response: Harry S Truman National Historic Site, Independence, Missouri,” March 1984.

¹⁸¹ Trip Report, Park Planner, Planning & Environmental Quality, MWRO to Associate Regional Director, Planning and Resource Preservation, MWRO, April 19 1984 files of Harry S Truman NHS, D18.

additional twenty-eight nearby properties identified for preservation through less-than-fee acquisitions such as preservation easements. For properties beyond these twenty-eight but within the NHL Historic District, the alternative recommended that NPS accept donation of preservation easements, and seek to acquire preservation easements on all Truman-related properties. The preferred alternative also proposed the use of from one to three additional buildings which would be adaptively rehabilitated for use as support facilities. It also recommended that NPS continue to participate in the city's shuttle bus system.¹⁸²

By the summer of 1984, negative responses to the proposed GMP alternatives were becoming more numerous, but these were primarily from within NPS. In July, for example, Assistant to the Deputy Director of NPS Allan Fitzsimmons stated "that there is little good to be said for the plan." The three action alternatives, he explained, would require the acquisition of property with a boundary extension which had to be approved by the NPS Director, and which had not happened. The preferred alternatives were unrealistic, he argued, given the expenses that would be involved for acquisition, maintenance, and staff. "Moreover," he continued,

the plan does not present a convincing case for the need to expand the boundary even if we were authorized to do so. The plan's assumption that because a church expanded a parking lot, the entire neighborhood (as already protected by both city and federal historic district designations and good local zoning requirements) is going to somehow deteriorate significantly is a highly tenuous and hardly appropriate justification for a legislative initiative or multi-million dollar decisions.

Fitzsimmons also challenged the proposed curatorial work and storage space: "Why? This is not a museum," he queried, adding that the legislation did not provide authority for it to become one.¹⁸³

In the face of this and other criticisms, the planning team prepared a revised draft GMP and Environmental Assessment (EA), which it delivered for review to the NPS Regional Solicitor's Office, HFC, Midwest Archeological Center (MWAC), Harry S Truman NHS, and MWRO, on October 29, 1984.¹⁸⁴ The initial response continued to include strong criticisms of the plan for its over-reach. Susan Kaplan, in the Office of Policy Analysis at the Washington Office of NPS, for example, stated, "My main concern is that it unnecessarily goes beyond the requirements of the authorizing legislation. . . . There is absolutely no justification whatsoever for expanding the boundary of the site to preserve the immediate neighborhood surrounding the Truman home. . . . In short, I am adamantly opposed to this proposal and would recommend to the Assistant Secretary that

¹⁸² "Tentative Preferred Alternative—HSTR/GMP," June 12, 1984; files of Harry S Truman NHS. See also Robert Fink, ACHP to John Kawamoto, Acting Regional Director, MWRO, April 26, 1984, files of Harry S Truman NHS, H4217; and Memorandum, Assistant Manager, Midwest/Rocky Mountain Team, DSC to Regional Director, MWRO, June 5, 1984, files of Harry S Truman NHS, D18.

¹⁸³ Memorandum, Allan Fitzsimmons to John Haubert, July 11, 1984; files of Harry S Truman NHS; emphasis in original.

¹⁸⁴ Memorandum, Acting Regional Director, MWRO to Associate Director, Planning and Development, WASO, October 29, 1984; files of Harry S Truman NHS, D18.

he not approve any plan for this site that involves any proposal for boundary expansion.”¹⁸⁵ Special Assistant for Policy Development Dwight Rettie at the Washington Office of NPS commented that “This is the most excessively drawn GMP I can recall ever reading. It is vastly overblown, exceeds all reasonable limits of resource requirements, and is based on debatable and largely unsupported policy and managerial presumptions. In short, I think the plan completely misses the mark.”¹⁸⁶ Other review comments were more gentle, though still insisting that the draft GMP did not make a clear enough case for amending the legislation to expand the boundary of the NHS.¹⁸⁷ Acting Director of Cultural Resources Jerry L. Rogers, however, together with Chief Historian Ed Bearss, was supportive of the plan and said, “it gives me pleasure to endorse the proposal as submitted.”¹⁸⁸

In the face of such strong comments, the planning team worked through 1985 to strengthen their arguments. The three action alternatives that were presented in 1984 recommended acquisition either in fee or through easements of different numbers of buildings surrounding the Truman Home, with NPS making the acquisitions. In 1985, the GMP planning team shifted the emphasis toward the use of easements, mixed with a limited amount of fee acquisition, with the preferred alternative for a private, locally-managed preservation trust rather than NPS acquiring the easements. The trust would have begun with a one-time Congressional appropriation as seed money to launch the trust and its efforts at securing historic preservation grants. Even this effort to place the burden on local entities rather than the federal government required justification, however. In early January 1985 Superintendent Norm Reigle prepared a briefing statement for internal use only, in the attempts to strengthen the argument for two points in particular: “The existing boundary of the Harry S Truman National Historic Site is inadequate to provide site support and accomplish the legislatively mandated mission,” and that the “setting of the Home in a suburban neighborhood is equally important as the Home it self [sic] in understanding the life style and its influences on former President Harry S Truman.” In support of the latter point, Reigle included a timeline of preservation activities in Independence, starting in 1967 with the unsuccessful attempt to rezone the portion of North Delaware near the Truman Library, described in Chapter 1, and continuing through the bruising battles in 1984 regarding the reduction in boundaries of the local heritage district, described in Chapter 8.¹⁸⁹

In a 1985 revised draft of the GMP, the planning team provided additional information about how the preservation trust would operate, including the addition of thirty-three properties within the NHS boundary. For example, the boundary extensions for the Wallace and Noland homes would be achieved through a separate legislative process from the extension of the boundary to include the preservation trust. The

¹⁸⁵ Memorandum, Susan Kaplan to Jahn Haubert, NPS, November 14, 1984; files of Harry S Truman NHS.

¹⁸⁶ Memorandum, Special Assistant for Policy Development, WASO to Chief, Division of Park Planning and Special Studies, WASO, November 29, 1984; files of Harry S Truman NHS, A56 (022).

¹⁸⁷ See, for example, Jim Douglas, PPA to John Haubert, NPS, November 20, 1984; files of Harry S Truman NHS.

¹⁸⁸ Memorandum, Acting Associate Director, Cultural Resources to Associate Director, Planning and Development, WASO, November 16, 1984; files of Harry S Truman, H30 (418).

¹⁸⁹ [Norm Reigle], Briefing Paper, January 16, 1985, files of Harry S Truman NHS.

legislation for the trust, moreover, would not give NPS any condemnation authority. The City of Independence, meanwhile, formally supported acquisition of the Wallace and Noland homes but opposed the proposed preservation trust that could acquire additional properties in fee simple or by easement. In this 1985 revision, however, the GMP retained its proposal to develop a preservation trust to provide additional protection for the neighborhood surrounding the Truman Home.¹⁹⁰

Opposition to the proposed preservation trust became more organized and concerted with the release of the revised draft GMP in 1985. Several churches and other community organizations provided response templates for citizens to send to NPS. The tenor of these was to support acquisition of the Wallace and Noland Homes but to reject the concept of the preservation trust. In its May 1986 revised draft of the EA component of the GMP, the planning team made a strong recommendation to acquire the Wallace and Noland Homes but softened its recommendation regarding protection of the surrounding neighborhood while defining more clearly the perceived threats to the neighborhood and their belief in the inadequacy of existing local controls to protect it. The plan received a measure of support in 1985 when Secretary of the Interior Donald P. Hodel placed the NHL Historic District on its list of most threatened sites. Stopping short of formal recommendation for a preservation trust, the revised draft GMP recommended its consideration or that of some similar approach to neighborhood protection, recognizing that any formal expansion of the NHS boundaries would require Congressional action.

At the same time, the 1986 revised draft GMP placed increased emphasis on the need for collections management and an off-site curatorial storage facility. While this was a component of earlier drafts of the GMP, it was obscured by the attention given to neighborhood preservation efforts and was made more prominent in this draft. By this time, the cataloging was well underway, with approximately 3,600 items cataloged already but untold thousands more still to be cataloged. Indeed, the 1986 revised draft GMP led with a discussion of this issue, asserting that the legislation creating the Truman Home NHS, together with Mrs. Truman's will, placed on NPS responsibility for care of the interior objects as well as the home itself. The GMP pointed out that many of the items in the collection were not then receiving proper protection or care and that, at present funding, it could take up to twenty-five years to fully catalog and protect the home's artifacts. While the Truman Library was providing climate controlled and protected storage space for some items that the park staff had removed from the home during early cataloging, it was not a long-term solution. The preferred long-term solution was secured, off-site storage.¹⁹¹ This topic will be discussed in Chapter 9.

¹⁹⁰ *General Management Plan: Harry S Truman National Historic Site, Missouri*, 1985; files of Harry S Truman NHS.

¹⁹¹ "Environmental Assessment for the General Management Plan, Harry S Truman National Historic Site, Missouri," Draft, May 1986; files of Harry S Truman NHS.

With these revisions, the GMP received support at the Washington level in June 1986 and was ordered released for public review.¹⁹² Review copies were produced and widely distributed by Denver Service Center (DSC) on September 30, 1986, and comments began pouring into the Harry S Truman NHS administrative offices in October. Nearly all supported acquisition of the Wallace and Noland Homes, though many were less enthusiastic about using them for visitor services or office space. Many, however, questioned the need for, and fair operation of, the preservation trust concept. Although the board for the trust would have an equal number of representatives from the Independence political factions, distrust prevailed over which faction would take control of the trust. Others were convinced, however incorrectly and in the face of NPS declarations to the contrary, that the GMP granted NPS powers of condemnation. Although there were many comments, none led to substantive changes in the GMP. The DSC continued to lead the process of revising the GMP through the winter of 1986, and the final GMP was released in May 1987, three years after the site opened to the public.

Other Planning Documents

Although the GMP was the primary planning document and established the basis for the park's direction for the next decade, it was supplemented by other studies and planning documents focused on specific resources. Two of the major plans were discussed earlier in this chapter, the Historic Structures Report and the Historic Furnishings Plan, which addressed the two key components of the park's protection and preservation. Two other key documents produced in the park's early years were the Cultural Landscape Report (CLR) and the Resources Management Plan (RMP), both of which were among the top priorities for planning requirements in the 1983 "Statement for Management." The RMP was completed in 1986, and the CLR was completed in 1989.

Unlike most of the early planning documents and studies, the RMP was prepared by the Harry S Truman NHS staff rather than at MWRO or DSC. The focus of the RMP was cultural resources, the options for their treatment, and the recommended courses of actions. The RMP is organized by the individual resource, primarily the home and carriage house, but also including a range of contributing structures and objects such as the fence, pergola, sundial post, flagpole, and gas lamp, for a total of twelve resources. At the time, none of these resources had yet been entered on the List of Classified Structures, the official database of cultural resources on NPS property. For each resource, various treatment options were considered, and a recommended course of action was made for each one. In addition, the RMP included recommendations for an off-site storage facility for the park's vast collection of items, the majority of which had yet to be cataloged, and for hiring an additional staff member to serve as a registrar who would be responsible for cataloging, a process that, the RMP estimated, could take from four to

¹⁹² Memorandum, Associate Director, WASO to Regional Director, MWRO, June 25, 1986; files of Harry s Truman NHS, D18.

seven years to complete.¹⁹³ The RMP also included a discussion of access for the disabled and provided additional recommendations for an oral history program at the site.

The RMP also discussed the proposed periods for restoration and interpretation of the home. In a review of current management procedures in the Introduction, the “as is, where is” condition of the home when it came under NPS administration served as the starting point. However, the combination of the rich history of use by, first, Bess Truman’s family and then the Trumans themselves and the fact that there had been some disturbance in the Trumans’ arrangement of furnishings in the years surrounding Mrs. Truman’s death in 1982 opened the door to other interpretive possibilities. After discussing other periods for restoration and interpretation, including the mid-nineteenth century beginnings through the early years of the Trumans’ marriage as well as the later presidential and post-presidential years, the “focus returned to the ‘It looks just like they left it’ aspect,” according to the RMP. The RMP continued, “By maintaining the home, furnishings, and grounds at this period, technically the date of Bess Truman’s death, but broadly including the approximate 11 years just prior to the death of the President and later that of Mrs. Truman, we provide the most effective period in terms of preservation and maintenance of structure and contents.”¹⁹⁴ This approach to understanding the home’s period of significance and interpretation, first defined in the RMP, remains in place.

Work on the CLR began in 1986, and was finalized in 1989. Cultural landscape reports were then a new type of study within NPS, and Service-wide guidelines were still being developed when work on the Truman Home was beginning. Historian Ron Cockrell was aware of the approach NPS was beginning to take with such studies and collaborated with Regional Landscape Architect Keith Kruger to prepare the CLR. The report consists of two principal sections: a historical narrative that focuses on the landscape and how it changed over the years; and an ecological section that details the existing vegetation and design, with recommendations for the restoration and maintenance of the informal nature of the yard as the Trumans kept it.¹⁹⁵ Unlike previous site studies, the CLR was being prepared after it was clear that the Noland and Wallace Homes were to be added to the Harry S Truman NHS as discussed earlier with regard to the GMP. The CLR, therefore, included discussions of the historic background and ongoing maintenance recommendations for the cultural landscapes of these three homes as well.

As with the RMP, the CLR includes a valuable discussion of the historic period, but oriented toward the landscape, not the home and its contents. As Cockrell recalled later, the historic period of the landscape was extended beyond that of the home’s historic period to include the years 1953 to 1972. Research on the home and its contents, which Cockrell conducted in preparation of the HSR and the HRS, revealed relatively limited

¹⁹³ “Resource Management Plan,” [1986]; copy without a cover page in the files of Harry S Truman NHS.

¹⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, Section B.

¹⁹⁵ Ron Cockrell, Keith Kruger, *Cultural Landscape Report: Harry S Truman National Historic Site, Independence, Missouri* (authorized November 6, 1989); digitized version from files of Harry S Truman NHS.

information on the interiors prior to Bess Truman's death. "But the landscape," Cockrell noted, "is different. Because we didn't have information about the inside of the house, there's no way that we could have brought it back to 1972. It had to be '82 for the inside. Not so for the grounds, because the grounds, during the period, were well photographed, and so we knew what it looked like when Harry Truman died."¹⁹⁶ Extensive use of photographs, combined with interviews with workers who maintained the yard for the Trumans when they were in Washington and when they lived in Independence, allowed for a clear understanding of the yard and how it should look. In particular, the Trumans kept a very light hand on their yard, allowing vegetation to grow so as to form a visual barrier to the eyes of passers-by who sought a glimpse of the former president. In this way, the Trumans screened the back porch off the kitchen to allow them to sit on the porch and view the lawn and gardens. The tall, unkempt-looking shrubbery allowed them to sit on the porch in relative privacy. The CLR's maintenance section, therefore, provides guidance on maintaining the Truman's approach to their yard. This approach, which honors the Trumans' light hand on the landscape resulting in a casual, nearly unkempt yard, has attracted occasional complaints from visitors who expect a more carefully manicured space for a former president. Such complaints, however, open the door to discussions of the Trumans and their mix of public and private lives in Independence, Missouri.

¹⁹⁶ Ron Cockrell, oral history interview, December 18, 2015.

Chapter 5: The Truman Home

For its first six years, the Harry S Truman NHS consisted only of the 0.77-acre lot on North Delaware with the home and carriage house along with the Visitor Center and administrative offices in the historic Fire Station No. 1 several blocks away. While the importance of adding the two Wallace homes behind the Truman Home and the Noland Home across the street was recognized very early on, it took several years for this expansion to receive Congressional approval. The patterns of administration, interpretation, and curatorial care for the Harry S Truman NHS were thus established when the sole focus was on the Truman's home on North Delaware. Even after the Wallace and Noland Homes and the Truman Farm in Grandview, Missouri, were added to the park, however, the Truman Home, given its central importance and its on-going structural issues, remained the top priority for maintenance and preservation. The need to evaluate, preserve, and repair the home while also preserving nearly all of the original materials, finishes, furnishings, and contents has led to development of innovative restoration and rehabilitation methods.

Initial Assessment and Repairs

Chapter 3 recounted the condition of the Truman Home when NPS accepted responsibility for it in the winter of 1982-83. The Trumans made extensive renovations to their home in the mid-1950s after returning to it from Washington, D.C. These alterations are recorded in extensive detail in the HSR. By the 1960s, however, as Harry Truman's health was beginning to fail, the home saw little in the way of significant repair. This lack of attention to maintenance continued for the decade after Mr. Truman died in 1972 until Bess Wallace Truman died in October 1982. Although solid-looking on the exterior, closer inspections, undertaken by NPS restoration and historical architectural staff in early 1983, revealed significant problems with the home's stability and safety. In particular, MWRO Restoration Specialist Lee Jameson noted problems with the roofing and gutters that allowed water to enter the upper floors of the home, an electrical wiring system that relied on antiquated materials, and exterior architectural details that were suffering significant decay. In addition, the home's exterior was in need of repainting, and it had no fire protection or security system in place.¹⁹⁷

While Jameson, Restoration Specialist Mike Lee, and Historical Architect Al O'Bright were anxious to explore and correct the full range of structural and maintenance needs, the immediate concern was to have the home safe and presentable for the public opening in May 1984. The principal work prior to the 1984 opening was in two areas: roofing and electrical. Restraining all plans for restoration work, however, was the need for funding. As outlined in Chapter 3, the Harry S Truman NHS did not have a dedicated budget even in the months after the Congressional action in May 1983 authorized funds

¹⁹⁷ Memorandum, Restoration Specialist to Associate Regional Director, Planning and Resource Preservation, January 25, 1983; Midwest Region Cultural Resources Archive, L58 (MWR-PC).

because of the lead-time needed to get into the federal budget planning system. Planners at MWRO, therefore, arranged multiple sources of funding to provide for initial staffing and supplies, and much of the earliest maintenance work was paid for from the Park Restoration and Improvement Program (PRIP), launched in 1981. The administration of President Ronald Reagan sought to slow the growth of NPS by limiting new land acquisition but established PRIP under the Jobs Bill to provide funds for infrastructure work. For instance, in May 1983, MWRO announced plans to apportion \$75,000 from its share of PRIP funds for the electric wiring and roof and gutter repairs at the Truman Home.¹⁹⁸

Little actual maintenance work took place during 1983 as MWRO staff developed plans and contract documents for these two initial projects. Rewiring the home's electrical service was the first project, which Historical Architect O'Bright recalled was "an immense task. . . . It [the home's electrical service] had everything. Everything you could think of. It was the history of electrical wiring." In addition to knob and tube, he continued, "It was armored cable, shielded cable."¹⁹⁹ Bid solicitations were sent out in November 1983, and Watkins Electric Company began work in January 1984.²⁰⁰ The project involved installing all new wiring but leaving the original wiring in place as, O'Bright recalled, "a testament to the history of wiring! Almost wiring history from .knob-and-tube all the way through Romex...through shielded cable and everything...." The home was then re-wired with 200-amp service, with new connections run into the home through underground trenches. This work was completed by April 30, 1984, just in time for the opening two weeks later.²⁰¹

Work on the Truman Home roof began shortly after the electric work started. Rather than an entire re-roofing project, however, the objectives were limited to stopping the principal leaks that were allowing water into the second floor of the home. The source of the water infiltration was identified as the flat-seam metal portions of the roof, particularly over the porches, together with faulty gutters and flashing. Solicitations for bids on the project were sent out in October 1983, and Penn Perry, Inc. submitted the winning bid. Work began on March 17, 1984 and consisted of removing all existing steel sheet metal, roll roofing, and hot pitch. This initial work revealed partially deteriorated joists and roof sheathing, which were repaired and strengthened with new lumber. The repaired areas were then overlapped with new asphalt roofing felt and rosin sized slip sheets before a new metal roof was installed. In addition, the home's gutters were rebuilt. The work suffered a setback on March 18, 1984, barely six weeks before the home was to open, when a devastating hail storm followed immediately by freezing rain struck while

¹⁹⁸ Brent Schondelmeyer, "Park Service to Spend \$75,000 on Repairs to Truman Home," *Kansas City Star*, May 18, 1983; clipping in files of Harry S Truman NHS.

¹⁹⁹ Al O'Bright oral history interview, January 27, 2016.

²⁰⁰ Memorandum, Associate Regional Director, Planning and Resource Preservation, MWRO to Regional Director, MWRO, November 15, 1983; files of Harry S Truman NHS, H3015. See also Memorandum, Superintendent, Harry S Truman NHS to Contracting Officer, MWRO, May 1, 1984; files of Harry S Truman NHS, D5217.

²⁰¹ "Bids Sought for Truman Home Wiring," *The Examiner* (Independence, Missouri), December 10, 1983; clipping in files of Harry S Truman NHS. See also "For the Love of Harry," notes by Administrative Officer Joan Sanders.

the new roofing underlayment was being installed and before the metal seams of the roof were soldered. As Historian Ron Cockrell reported later in 1984, “NPS personnel worked furiously covering the exposed roof with plastic, roofing paper, and mastic until interior leaks either stopped or slowed.”²⁰² These frenzied efforts were successful, and allowed the work to continue. The repaired roof was completed by April 15, 1984, in time for the home’s public opening the next month.²⁰³ At the same time, MWRO planning staff completed the Section 106 compliance requirements to install fire, theft, and intrusion detection and alarm systems in the home, and the concrete sidewalk leading to the home was replaced shortly before the home’s opening.

Early Exterior Rehabilitation

While the two immediate needs of electrical wiring and preliminary roofing repairs were being completed in early 1984, Jameson, Lee, and O’Bright began planning for additional exterior renovation work that would begin after the home’s opening in May. Jameson and Lee, for example, conducted a survey of the decorative brackets on the home’s exterior, finding that only twenty-eight of the more than 200 wooden brackets needed to be either replaced or repaired.²⁰⁴ At the same time, O’Bright conducted investigations necessary to prepare construction documents for the exterior painting. The home had been painted numerous times over the past century but had never been stripped; the existing paint, O’Bright recalled, “was about... a quarter- to a half-inch thick... there was paint, literally, in stalactites dripping off this... two hundred and some-odd brackets on the house.”²⁰⁵

The bid and construction documents for the exterior painting specified repair and rehabilitation of all exterior woodwork features and were prepared in the summer of 1984. Campos Construction of Omaha, Nebraska won the bid for the work in October 1984 and began work to prepare the home for painting and repair through the late fall and the winter. This included taking wood and paint samples, performing carpentry and millwork for many of the architectural elements, and removing windows (Figure 24). The painting and re-installation of the repaired and repainted exterior woodwork took place beginning in March 1985. All window and exterior hardware was saved, labeled, and its exact location documented before removal so that it could be reinstalled by the contractor at the end of the project.²⁰⁶ At the same time, MWRO staff worked with the contractor to develop safe methods for removing the existing exterior paint (Figure 25). The site superintendent for Campos, Ernie Chambers, had been brought out of retirement for the work and developed a method of joining two heat guns that proved an effective way to remove the many layers of paint. Despite numerous precautions, however, the use

²⁰² Cockrell, “CRM’s Mobilize to Activate Harry S Truman NHS,” 13.

²⁰³ “Summary of Work: Metal Roof Replacement, Truman Home,” 1984; Midwest Region Cultural Resources Archive.

²⁰⁴ Cockrell, “CRMs Mobilize to Activate Harry S Truman NHS,” 11-12.

²⁰⁵ Al O’Bright, oral history interview, January 27, 2016.

²⁰⁶ Memorandum, Project Inspector, HSTR to Contracting Officers Representative, HSTR, November 16, 1984; files of Harry S Truman NHS, S7217.



Figure 24. Ernie Chambers removing a bracket from the Truman Home, 1985. Photo provided by Harry S Truman NHS.



Figure 25. Stripping paint from the Truman Home, 1985. Photo provided by Harry S Truman NHS.

of heat guns led to one small fire on March 20, 1985, which was ignited near a dining room window. It was extinguished quickly, but smoke infiltrated the home, and the smoke detectors failed to sound an alarm.²⁰⁷

All other components of the project went well with the exception of the work on the decorative wood brackets. All were removed during the course of the exterior rehabilitation project, and Campos Construction was instructed to strip the paint without means of caustic strippers. Unfortunately, the proscription against caustic strippers was not conveyed to the subcontractors, who used a caustic stripper. The cleaned brackets were then repainted and delivered to the home for reinstallation. Within months, however, the white-painted brackets began turning brown. Once the problem was discovered and the cause identified, the contractor was required to re-strip the brackets, neutralize the caustic remaining in the wood, and repaint and reinstall them. At the same time, several soffit and fascia sections that had rotted as a result of failure of the original gutters were replaced. The exterior painting and rehabilitation project was completed in November 1985.²⁰⁸ While nearly all the original brackets were repaired and put back in place, twelve were too far deteriorated to be repaired, and had to be replaced with replicas. All these replacement brackets were placed in space 302-A, at the window bay on the north side of the home. Several salvaged representatives of the original brackets were retained and cataloged into the museum collection.²⁰⁹

While the exterior rehabilitation work was under way in the summer of 1984, Lee and O'Bright conducted a preliminary physical investigation of the interior wall cavities of the home. The purpose of the investigation was to help prepare alternatives for installation of interior climate control systems to replace the window air conditioners used by the Trumans. Work was conducted from the exterior of the home by separating the butt ends of portions of the siding, cutting nails behind the siding, and then drilling a 2.5-inch diameter hole through the sheathing into the wall cavity. The studies found three different wall systems, with combinations of brick nogging and wood sheathing. Because of the complexity of the wall systems in the home, the recommendation from Lee and O'Bright was not to install any kind of vapor barrier within the existing exterior wall cavities.²¹⁰ While the exterior rehabilitation was being conducted, new furnace and air conditioner units were installed. The air conditioner's condensing units were located outside the north wall of the kitchen, O'Bright reported, but "very little noise can be detected from inside the kitchen," and sufficient air was being pushed through the vents.²¹¹ Shortly thereafter, a new fire and intrusion alarm system was installed in the

²⁰⁷ Telephone note, Skip Brooks, HSTR to Al O'Bright, MWRO, March 21, 1985; files of Harry S Truman NHS.

²⁰⁸ Al O'Bright, oral history interview, January 27, 2016.

²⁰⁹ Memorandum, Steve Harrison, Museum Curator, HSTR to File, February 14, 1986; files of Harry S Truman NHS, D62R. The replaced brackets are numbers 2, 4, 9, 10, 2, 21, 22, 29, 20, 44, 50, and 51.

²¹⁰ "Physical Investigation Report, Truman Home, July 24-26, 1984," Restoration Specialist Michael Lee, Historical Architect Alan O'Bright; files of Harry S Truman NHS, H30.

²¹¹ Memorandum, Historical Architect, MWRO to Associate Regional Director, Planning and Resource Preservation, MWRO, October 30, 1985; files of Harry S Truman NHS, H30.

home by Sentry Protective Alarms, Inc. Work on the new security system began on October 28, 1985, and was completed December 16, 1985.²¹²

Planning for making the Truman Home accessible to those in wheelchairs began in 1984 with a Handicap Access Study by Steve Stone from DSC. The study included both the home itself and the city-operated shuttle bus that transported visitors from the Visitor Center to the home. Stone's study showed that the interior of the home could be accessible to those in a wheelchair but access onto the porch would need to be assisted. The recommended means to assist was a Stair-Trac, a mechanized system that could lift the chair with the person in it up the stairs of the back porch.²¹³ The Stair-Trac use was implemented at the home in November 1985, after the route of the tour had been changed to start at the back porch, and was operational the following month after staff training. The device was used successfully except for those visitors whose chairs were too large. In this case, park staff transferred the person to a park-owned wheelchair that fit the Stair-Trac.²¹⁴

Roof

Several smaller projects were completed during 1986, including designing and installing exterior lighting for the Truman Home and conducting an analysis of the home's masonry foundation.²¹⁵ A surprisingly complicated issue was arising, however, that would command the attention of Harry S Truman NHS and MWRO staff for several years: replacing the existing asphalt shingle roof on the Truman Home. The Trumans had replaced the original slate roof with asphalt shingles in 1969, three years before Mr. Truman died in 1972. By the mid-1980s, the roof was showing signs of deterioration. While the threat of water infiltration from the deteriorating asphalt shingles in 1986 was not as bad as from the metal portions of the roof in 1983 and 1984, the water damage that resulted from deterioration of the metal portions of the roof on the porches and widow's walk led to overall roof deterioration. In 1984, MWRO staff decided to replace the shingles. With the goal of keeping the home exactly as Bess Truman left it in 1982, MWRO staff identified the manufacturer of the shingles used in 1969 and prepared an estimate and work order to purchase them for installation. By the time funding was approved for the project and the contract awarded in 1986, however, the manufacturer of

²¹² Pre-Construction Conference minutes, October 16, 1985; files of Harry S Truman NHS, D5217. See also Memorandum, Restoration Specialist, MWRO to Associate Regional Director, Planning and Resource Preservation, MWRO, December 19, 1985; files of Harry S Truman NHS, H30.

²¹³ Memorandum, Superintendent, Harry S Truman to Steve Stone, DSC, February 11, 1985; files of Harry S Truman NHS, A7615.

²¹⁴ Memorandum, Chief Ranger, Harry S Truman to Superintendent, Harry S Truman, October 27, 1987; files of Harry S Truman NHS, A76.

²¹⁵ See Memorandum, Superintendent, Harry S Truman to Associate Regional Director, Planning and Resource Preservation, June 4, 1986; Midwest Region Cultural Resources Archive, D52. See also Katherine H. Hax, "Mortar Analysis at the Truman Home and Taft House," n.d. [1986]; files of Harry S Truman NHS. The mortar analysis was carried out following a request from Norm Reigle for assistance based on observed deterioration of the foundation's stone and mortar; see Memorandum, Superintendent, Harry S Truman to Associate Regional Director, Planning and Resource Preservation, June 12, 1986; Midwest Region Cultural Resources Archive, D52 HSTR.

the earlier shingles, GAF, had ceased making that type of shingles, which had two tabs rather than three. This unfortunate timing set up a several-year discussion to identify a solution. Associate Regional Director for Planning and Resource Protection John Kawamoto retained close contact with Harry S Truman NHS staff regarding the difficulties of the project, and supported Superintendent Reigle's desire to find a way to install the kind of shingles that the Trumans used rather than pursue the more expedient course of using three-tab shingles. In August 1986, MWRO cancelled the reroofing contract and began a study of roofing alternatives.²¹⁶

Historical Architect Al O'Bright prepared an alternatives analysis in 1987 that discussed the different options for replacing the Truman Home roof. O'Bright expressed the time-sensitive nature of the project, noting that the roof "is in need of attention within the next two years. The existing shingles should not be allowed to deteriorate more than the present to prevent interior water damage." He considered five alternatives: custom-ordering two-tab shingles, locating an overstock supply of two-tab shingles, modifying no-tab shingles into two-tab shingles, installing three-tab shingles, and installing slate shingles as was on the roof prior to 1969. His recommendation, given the need to protect the roof as soon as possible, was to install three-tab shingles in place of the existing two-tab shingles. The slight visual change, he argued, "is justified by the unavailability of the required asphalt shingles and the need to replace the existing shingles within 2 years." However, he noted that modifying no-tab shingles was the next-best alternative, even though there was no guarantee that the shingles could be successfully altered.²¹⁷

Despite this recommendation, Reigle and Kawamoto were adamant that two-tabbed shingles should be used, and MWRO staff continued to search for suppliers of two-tab shingles throughout 1987, contacting several commercial manufacturers without success. By December 1987, both MWRO and Harry S Truman NHS staff were still indicating a willingness to continue to pursue options that would allow them to install two-tab shingles on the home, whether custom-made or retro-fitted from no-tab shingles; from that time on, there were few references to using three-tab shingles.²¹⁸ In May 1988, Acting Associate Regional Director for Planning and Resource Preservation Steven Kovar took part in a visit to Herbert Hoover NHS, in Iowa, where he had a chance to discuss the Truman Home roof situation with Jim Askins, Chief of the Williamsport Preservation Training Center (WPTC) in Maryland (now the Historic Preservation Training Center), which is affiliated with HFC. In October 1988, Kovar formally requested the assistance of WPTC in locating shingles that matched the color of the

²¹⁶ See telephone meeting notes, Steve Harrison, Acting Superintendent and John K., MWRO, July 3, 1986; files of Harry S Truman NHS, D5217; Memorandum, Associate Regional Director, Planning and Resource Preservation to Superintendent, Harry S Truman, July 11, 1986; Midwest Region Cultural Resources Archive, H3015 (MWR-PC). See also Memorandum, Associate Regional Director, Planning and Resource Preservation, MWRO to Superintendent, Harry S Truman, August 18, 1986; files of Harry S Truman NHS, D5217.

²¹⁷ "Alternative Analysis, Re-Roofing Truman Home, Harry S Truman National Historic Site," attached to Memorandum, Acting Regional Director, MWRO to Associate Director, Cultural Resources Management, WASO, June 10, 1987. See also Al O'Bright, oral history interview, January 27, 2016.

²¹⁸ Meeting notes, December 3, 1987; Midwest Region Cultural Resources Archive, H3015.

existing Truman Home shingles and could be made as two-tab shingles.²¹⁹ In his reply, HFC Manager David Wright identified the issue as providing opportunity for a training exercise for the WPTC program. His proposal was to obtain the shingle material in an appropriate color and then develop a method to fabricate the finished two-tab shingles. Associate Regional Director for Planning and Resource Preservation David Given quickly approved the proposal in December 1988, appointing Al O’Bright as the MWRO point of contact.²²⁰ In early 1989, WPTC staff began searching for sources of shingle materials as well as for older, two-tab cutters. Early samples received in the spring of 1989 were unacceptable from the standpoint of color, but continued calls to GAF later in 1989 finally succeeded, eliciting a promise of a special run of shingles that could then be appropriately cut. By August of 1990, the shingle blanks had been delivered to the Truman Home. The machinery to produce the two-tab versions had been developed by WPTC, and a task directive was issued for the work.²²¹ Staff from WPTC brought two two-ton manual presses that they had “ingeniously modified. . .with the cutter blades supplied by the shingle manufacturer.”²²² Every shingle would have to be hand-cut using the manual press to produce the required two-tabbed shingle. With the materials and equipment in place, the re-roofing work began in October 1990, and was completed by early November.²²³

The successor to WPTC, the Historic Preservation Training Center (HPTC), was invited back to the Truman Home in 2008 to replace their 1990 roof. The roof had weathered and experienced additional deterioration resulting from extreme heating caused by inadequate ventilation in the attic. The Historic Preservation Training Center crew removed the 1990 shingles and one section of roof sheathing that had also deteriorated, then installed a titanium synthetic underlayment material before installing the new shingles. As with the 1990 project, HPTC used blank shingles which were then cut on-site to the preferred two-tab format (Figure 26). Removed historic materials were inventoried, tagged, and provided to the Truman Home’s curatorial staff.²²⁴

²¹⁹ Memorandum, Acting Associate Regional Director, Planning and Resource Management to Chief, WPTC, October 24, 1988; Midwest Region Cultural Resources Archive, H3015.

²²⁰ Memorandum, Manager, HFC to Acting Associate Regional Director, Planning and Resource Preservation, MWRO, November 15, 1988, attached to reply Memorandum, December 15, 1988; Midwest Region Cultural Resources Archive, H30 (MWR-PC).

²²¹ See records of telephone calls: March 28, 1989, March 30, 1989, June 8, 1989, March 30, 1990, August 13, 1990, among restoration specialists from WPTC and O’Bright; files of Harry S Truman NHS, H3015. The draft Task Directive, dated July 31, 1990, is attached to Memorandum, Associate Regional Director, Planning and Resource Preservation, MWRO to Superintendent, Harry S Truman NHS, August 20, 1990; Midwest Region Cultural Resources Archive, D18.

²²² Memorandum, Historical Architect, MWRO to Associate Regional Director, Planning and Resource Preservation, MWRO, November 13, 1990; files of Harry S Truman NHS, H3015.

²²³ Memorandum, Project Supervisor, WPTC to Chief, WPTC, November 7, 1990; files of Harry S Truman NHS, D5217.

²²⁴ Larry Villalva, “The Truman Home Asphalt Roof Replacement Project,” summary sheet, November 21, 2008; files of Harry S Truman NHS.



Figure 26. Cutting shingles at the Truman Home, 2008. Photo provided by Harry S Truman NHS.

Structural Stabilization and Plaster Repair

With the new roof completed in 1990, the Truman Home was in stable shape while the Harry S Truman NHS staff focused on assessing and initial planning for the new additions to the park: the George Wallace Home, the Frank Wallace Home, and the Noland Home. All three homes needed varying amounts of repair and rehabilitation work, which took several years to complete. Within two years, however, the interior of the Truman Home showed significant signs of distress, a result of structural defects that took several years to identify and correct. In November 1990, while conducting the final inspection of the roofing work, O’Bright met with Facility Manager Michele Cefola, who had reported for duty one week before to replace Mike Healy, and toured the home with her. While in the home, O’Bright noticed “that certain areas of the interior plasters may be deteriorating.” He recommended that the plaster walls be monitored, photographed, and measured at set intervals to understand the possible deterioration.²²⁵

On-going observation during 1991 and 1992 revealed that plaster in various parts of the home was continuing to deteriorate. MWRO Restoration Specialist Charles Masten met with Cefola, Curator Carol Dage, and the Harry S Truman NHS maintenance staff in March 1993 to perform additional investigations. They met at the home with Tom

²²⁵ Memorandum, Historical Architect, MWRO to Associate Regional Director, Planning and Resource Preservation, MWRO, November 13, 1990; files of Harry S Truman NHS, H3015.



Figure 27. Wallpaper conservator Tom Edmondson, with Chief of Cultural Resources Carol Dage, 1992. Photo provided by Harry S Truman NHS.

Edmondson, of Heugh-Edmondson Conservation Services, LLC, of Kansas City, who had been serving as a wallpaper conservation consultant at the Truman Home (Figure 27). Masten and park staff concluded that plaster cracking seemed to be accelerating, particularly in areas surrounding the first and second floor south chimney and fireplaces, as well as a portion of the second floor bathroom ceiling which was continuing to bow. Edmondson removed small patches of the historic wallpaper in several places on the first floor ceiling to allow the placement of new crack monitors directly on the plaster surfaces. They also toured the basement, where the staff had noted increasing water penetration, in hopes of identifying the source. A small brick channel beneath the dirt floor was identified, which, they surmised, may have been connected to a spring or well. The pressing need for a structural engineering assessment was clear to all present.²²⁶

The monitoring devices showed continued plaster deterioration through the spring and early summer of 1993. The situation was particularly dangerous in the ceilings, where falling plaster had the potential to damage artifacts. In early July 1993, Masten travelled again to the Truman Home to install temporary stabilizers in the ceiling of the master bedroom, designated Room 204. With the help of Cefola and Maintenance Worker Jerry Kunsman, Masten installed approximately two dozen metal disks screwed into place through the plaster and into the solid wood lath or joists above and spaced approximately one foot apart and approximately six inches on either side of major cracks. Designed to hold the plaster in place, they were installed such that they could be removed

²²⁶ Memorandum, Restoration Specialist, MWRO to Associate Regional Director, Planning and Resource Preservation, MWRO, April 13, 1993; files of Harry S Truman NHS, H30.

when the plaster ceiling was restored.²²⁷ Recognizing that this was a temporary fix, Superintendent Ronald Mack submitted a funding request for FY94 of \$60,000 to rehabilitate the second floor plaster ceilings.²²⁸ During 1994, however, the plans changed, and Quinn Evans Architects of Ann Arbor, Michigan, was selected to conduct a thorough structural investigation “to evaluate the structural and interior finishes integrity, determine the causes of material distress, and recommend treatments for the preservation and restoration of structural members and interior finish materials” throughout the home. The assessment team headed by Quinn Evans Architects also included Robert Darvas Associates for the structural engineering assessment and Heugh-Edmondson Conservation Services, LLC, for the historic wallpaper conservation. The project kicked off with a site visit and inspection on October 25, 1994. This initial inspection identified several areas that showed evidence of structural weakness throughout the Truman Home, including floor boards, base boards, porches, and structural systems such as joists in addition to the distress expressed in the plaster walls and ceilings.²²⁹ The scale of the problems within the Truman Home was becoming more clear, and \$40,000 was allotted through the Outline of Park Requirements for FY 95.

Structural investigations of the interior of the home continued through 1995 and 1996, resulting in multiple changes to the original Scope of Work for repairs. The investigations continued also on the exterior, with test borings drilled into the lawn surrounding the home in September 1995 to determine the nature of soils surrounding the foundation. All work was conducted to avoid any destructive investigations. By the summer of 1996, however, this cautious approach had not yet yielded the hoped-for results. In particular, the porches on both the north and south sides continued to move separately away from the home itself, the chimney on the south side of the home adjacent to the living room was likewise continuing to pull away from the home, and many of the plaster finishes were deteriorating, perhaps beyond repair. At an on-site meeting in August 1996, Quinn Evans Architects recommended additional investigations, including an examination of interior wall and floor spaces. This would require removing portions of the original fabric and excavation along the north side of the foundation.²³⁰ Quinn Evans Architects prepared a proposal in September 1996, and an additional \$29,000 for this work was added to the contract at the end of the month.²³¹ The proposal was approved quickly, and investigations began in mid-November 1996. Work involved removing several sections of floorboards along the hearth in the master bedroom, so the curatorial staff first removed items from the mantle, the portrait of Harry Truman above the fireplace, and furnishings from the south side of the master bedroom on the second floor and the living room on the first floor. The precise position of each removed item was

²²⁷ Memorandum, Restoration Specialist, MWRO to Associate Regional Director, Planning Resource Preservation, MWRO, August 12, 1993; files of Harry S Truman NHS, H30.

²²⁸ Memorandum, Superintendent, Harry S Truman to Regional Director, MWRO, September 13, 1993; files of Harry S Truman NHS, F34.

²²⁹ Meeting Minutes, October 20 [sic], 1994; attached to Memorandum, Regional Director, MWRO to Superintendents, MWRO; files of Harry S Truman NHS, D24.

²³⁰ Meeting minutes, August 20, 1996; files of Harry S Truman NHS, D52R; see also request for modification to Scope of Work, August 30, 1996; files of Harry S Truman NHS, S7217.

²³¹ Amendment of Solicitation/Modification of Contract, September 24, 1996; files of Harry S Truman NHS.

fully documented before removal so that it could be put back in place following the investigations. In addition, Quinn Evans Architects removed sections of the siding on the south side porch off the living room and first floor bedroom in hopes of understanding the causes of movement by the porch.²³²

The investigations focused on the porch foundations, documenting insufficient foundations for the porch support system. The investigations also found evidence of interior structural deficiencies including cracking plaster. Work on the porch support systems was contracted in September 2001 to Abbott Construction of Waynesville, Missouri, who was also awarded the contract for re-painting the exterior of the home. Work on the porch involved carefully removing and labeling the porch decking on the front, south, and kitchen porches, excavating beneath the porches, and pouring eight-inch by four-inch concrete footers which then held steel support columns with beams attached to support the porch floor joists.²³³ Archeologists from the Midwest Archeological Center (MWAC) conducted investigations of the proposed excavation areas beneath the porches in October 2001. The exterior painting and structural work was completed in April 2002.²³⁴

The structural work for the home's interior was completed principally by staff from MWRO and Harry S Truman NHS, with the assistance of Tom Edmondson for restoration of the historic wallpapers. Superintendent James Sanders identified \$94,000 in funding for the interior work in November 2002, and tasked Chief of Cultural Resources Carol Dage with coordinating it. Historical Architect Al O'Bright reprised his role as project manager, drawing on design and construction documents provided by Quinn Evans Architects during their structural investigations in 1996 and 1997. O'Bright recommended dividing the work into two segments: wallpaper removal and conservation, and plaster repair.²³⁵

Because the project involved removing floorboards of the attic and second floor to gain access to the plaster ceilings below them and removing a variety of wall and ceiling paper coverings, it required substantial coordination to sequence the work among rooms that would be closed while others remained open for tours. Planning for the rehabilitation project continued through 2003 and into 2004 and included coordination with a structural engineer, Tom Fitzpatrick of Fitzpatrick Structural Engineering, P.C., in January 2004. Fitzpatrick prepared a structural evaluation with treatment recommendations in May 2004. Fitzpatrick noted that the ceiling above the second floor master bedroom had sagged by at least five inches, a result of ceiling lath having separated from attic floor joists. The washers that Park staff had installed nearly a decade before remained in place

²³² Carol Dage, "Structural Investigation-HS01, Living Room #104, South Porch #104B, Master Bedroom #204, November 6, 1996; files of Harry S Truman NHS, D52R.

²³³ Assessment of Actions Having an Effect on Cultural Resources form, July 7, 2001, attached to Memorandum, Regional Director, MWRO to Superintendent, Harry S Truman, August 8, 2001; files of Harry S Truman NHS, H4217. See also News Release, September 27, 2001; files of Harry S Truman NHS.

²³⁴ Archeological Work Plan, Harry S Truman National Historic Site, October 2001; files of Harry S Truman NHS; Billy W. Davis, Contracting Officer, MWRO to Tony Trotter, Abbott Insulation and General Contracting, May 8, 2002; files of Harry S Truman NHS.

²³⁵ Email exchange between Dage and O'Bright, November 22, 2002; files of Harry S Truman NHS.

but were not effective due to the nature of the second-floor ceiling's construction. Fitzpatrick described it as "unconventional." Not only had the plaster separated from the joists of the attic floor, at the time held in place only by the plaster's tension and by fiber paper applied to the ceiling by contractors hired by the Trumans, but the attic floor itself was incapable of supporting even a normal load. Years of storing enormous quantities of household goods in the attic had only exacerbated the problem. Fitzpatrick's conclusion was frightening:

The use of the attic floor for storage in the past further aggravates the problem, since storage load results in additional sustained long term superimposed load. Most likely the severe deflection of the attic joists caused plaster cracking initially and finally the separation of the furring [designed to hold the ceiling lath to the floor joists] as the nails worked their way out of the joists. The system was relieving itself of the overburden. In any case, the net result was for the furring/lath and plaster ceiling to separate from the joists and essentially sag down in the middle with the perimeter walls remaining as the only support. It is indeed fortunate that the ceiling didn't fall.²³⁶

Not only did the plaster ceiling need to be reattached to the attic floor joists, but the attic joists themselves needed to be stiffened to provide sufficient support for the ceiling.

The first project was to remove all of the Trumans' materials stored in the attic to the offsite curatorial facility that had been established in 1988, which helped to lessen the load on the attic floor joists.²³⁷ At the same time, Curator Carol Dage initiated a contract with Tom Edmondson of Heugh-Edmondson Conservation Services, LLC, to remove the historic wallpaper on the walls and to examine the paper that the Trumans' handyman had applied to the ceiling, with the intention of preserving the paper. As Al O'Bright recalled, "if Tom Edmondson had put a knife to those papers on the ceiling, the whole damn thing would have come down on our heads." Lewis McKarnin likewise recalled that "the wallpaper that was on the ceiling was the only thing that was holding the plaster up."²³⁸ At Fitzpatrick's recommendation, O'Bright oversaw the removal of the existing Masonite floors in the attic, "kept all the nails, we pulled up all the tongue-and-groove boards, labeled all of them, got down to the . . . joists, and then . . . had a big maintenance crew then—they lifted . . . like, sixteen-foot-long two-by-eights. They were select structural—through an attic window—up scaffolding, poked up through an attic window, and managed to lay them in."²³⁹ The new attic joists were sistered to the old joists to provide stability to the attic floor.

Once the new attic joists were in place beside the original joists, the architects and maintenance workers needed to devise methods to reattach the existing plaster ceiling

²³⁶ Fitzpatrick Structural Engineering, P.C., "Structural Evaluation & Treatment Recommendations: Master Bedroom Ceiling, Truman Home, Harry S. Truman National Historic Site," May 24, 2004, p. 4; files of Harry S Truman NHS.

²³⁷ The establishment of the offsite curatorial storage facility is discussed in Chapter 9.

²³⁸ Lewis McKarnin, oral history interview, February 4, 2016.

²³⁹ Al O'Bright, oral history interview, January 27, 2016.

back to the attic joists beneath the flooring. They did this by means of stainless steel wires and strapping that helped to suspend the plaster ceiling from the new joists above. They needed to flex the new joists while attaching the plaster ceiling, though, so that the new joists would pull the plaster, suspended by the wires and straps, back up to where the flex was released. O’Bright described the particularly low-tech approach devised by the maintenance crew:

We were trying to figure out how get some of the strain off the ceiling, because it had swagged down by five inches in the center. We wanted to pull it up just a little bit, and we were trying to figure out ways to do it. And we were thinking about putting scaffold underneath it and poking it up and all this sort of thing, and it just seemed kind of dangerous. And, finally, these four guys figured out how to do that. They—what they did was, they put in the new lumber—they sistered in the new lumber to the old joists. And then, they got—Joseph [Gray], and Joe [Cannon], and Alan [Stewart], between the three of them, that was probably about an eight-hundred-pound load, they stood them in the middle of each joist while Lewis [McKarnin] would tie the lath system—plaster and lath system. . . . And once those three got off, it bounced it up a little!²⁴⁰

Once the master bedroom plaster ceiling had been stabilized, the team moved to other rooms where there were similar plaster problems. Although the plaster in the master bedroom was found to be of high quality and maintaining contact with the original lath, the plaster was of poor quality in other rooms with the “keys” becoming separated from the lath. To save as much of the original fabric of the home as possible, O’Bright, McKarnin, and others worked to develop an adhesive that would let them reattach the plaster to the lath. O’Bright conducted research into adhesives that could support the plaster, and found that they were no longer available: “They were a little bit nasty. Although one was still really nasty. . . . it was, really, a nasty chemical. We had to go to a chemical supply house in Kansas City to get this stuff, and it’s – sodium hydroxide. We had to get, like, a gallon of that stuff, and mix it. We had lots – you know, had – I was wearing a respirator, and I had a moon suit on, and eye goggles, and we had the fan going like crazy in the – in the workshop to suck all that stuff out. It was really nasty stuff, but, once you got it mixed with the other stuff, it just became benign.”

Once they had the formula for mixing the adhesive, they began work in the home to reattach the plaster ceilings to the joists above. As O’Bright recalled, he and the Truman Home’s maintenance crew

generated a methodology where we would come down from the top floor, with the—the floor system was stripped off except for the joists. . . . then we had to drill in – holes into the individual laths between the joists. In some cases, if the ceiling was in really bad shape, we did that – like, three holes in each cavity on each lath. And it took a long time. . . . And then, we had to inject, kind of, a primer, which was made up of alcohol and some other – some other adhesive that was really watered down. And we injected that into it using a regular garden

²⁴⁰ Ibid.

sprayer, and then we used these big, oversized caulk guns that are used to caulk the outsides of log houses – these things, you know, to put sealant up. They’re really big, and they hold a lot of sealant – a lot of sealant, or, in our case, a lot of adhesive. So, we started mixing up the adhesive in bulk, loading it into the – into the caulk guns– and then, we’d bear on it until the adhesive would flow, and follow the underside, that little space between the plaster and the lath, and then would pop up where the – at the – at the – at the plaster keys. And we did that for each and every hole.

The crew started by injecting adhesives into the master bedroom ceiling, then went on to replicate the system for the entire Truman Home in a process that continued into 2009. As O’Bright recalled, “It was a long, long, drawn-out process. But, in doing that, we not only saved the historic materials, but also, we were able to see what was going on in the floor system—the structural systems, specifically, the attic floor and the second floor.”²⁴¹ This intimate knowledge of the home’s internal structural system proved useful for the next substantial renovation project.

Heating/Ventilation/Air Conditioning

On August 26, 2006, the day following the 90th anniversary of NPS, Secretary of the Interior Dirk Kempthorne announced the Centennial Initiative. The program was designed to prepare NPS for its 100th anniversary in 2016 by identifying goals that would be a foundation for the Service’s second century. In his directive to Kempthorne, President George W. Bush observed that NPS had a strong record of “conservation, preservation, and enjoyment,” and requested that he “identify signature projects and programs that are consistent with these goals and that continue the National Park Service legacy of leveraging philanthropic, partnership, and government investment for the benefit of national parks and their visitors.”²⁴² Together with this challenge, Department of the Interior’s FY08 budget included up to \$3 billion in new funds over the following nine years to allow a series of site upgrades and staffing improvements. In early 2008, Superintendent Larry Villalva announced that Harry S Truman NHS was one of the first parks in the Midwest Region to receive funds through the Centennial Initiative. This new funding provided \$1.175 million for projects with the stipulation that they had to be completed within eighteen months.

Several of the projects to be funded by Centennial Initiative appropriations were already in progress, including the structural stabilization and repairs to the plaster ceilings and walls throughout the Truman Home. The 2008 replacement of the home’s roof by HPTC, described earlier in this chapter, also was funded through the Centennial Initiative. Newly funded projects included the upgrade and installation of a heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) system and the installation of a fire

²⁴¹ Ibid.

²⁴² Quoted in “National Parks Centennial Initiative,” c. 2006, available online: <https://www.doi.gov/sites/doi.gov/files/migrated/budget/appropriations/2008/upload/National-Parks-Centennial-Initiative.pdf>.

suppression/sprinkler system throughout the home. All work involved extensive and comprehensive wallpaper removal, conservation, and restoration to the historic wall surface, which the firm of Heugh-Edmondson Conservation Services, LLC, had been performing on a piecemeal basis since 1991.²⁴³

The HVAC and fire suppression installations were planned to be installed simultaneously. Design work was guided in part by the experience gained during the ceiling plaster rehabilitation. Architectural and engineering planning and design took place throughout 2008 and 2009. The process was particularly complex due to the requirement to obligate funds quickly and the initial disinclination on the part of NPS contracting to include wallpaper conservation work in the overall project costs; in October 2008, for example, O’Bright received an email from Chief of Cultural Resources Dage that “contracting has balked at hiring a wallpaper conservator for the HVAC job. No one can understand why they are doing this. If we can’t get a conservator hired, the job is kaput.” As O’Bright recalled frequently in journal entries during the process, the entire HVAC project could have collapsed on several different occasions. In November 2008, for example, O’Bright held a telephone meeting with a MWRO contracting officer regarding the HVAC work; “I emphasized to him that if any of the many elements of the project goes down, the entire project goes down.” O’Bright and Dage were persuasive, however, and funds for the wallpaper work were available by late 2008. O’Bright worked almost exclusively with Dage for the planning of the project, noting frequently that Superintendent Larry Villalva was disinclined to become involved in the project. The plaster and structural repairs discussed earlier in this chapter provided both O’Bright and the AE firm with additional data regarding the home’s original structural system, which O’Bright occasionally called “creatively framed” and “unusual.” The unusual framing methods, he said, were unstable and led occasionally to cracks in ceilings. In spite of additional delays due to contracting and the needs to post the work in the *Federal Register*, an extension of time was granted for the HVAC work during the summer of 2009, and work was allowed to begin in the fall.²⁴⁴

The park announced that the Truman Home would be closed to the public from October 19, 2009, until spring 2010, while the construction progressed. Hammer Construction was awarded the work on September 21, 2009, scheduled to begin later in the fall. Planning for the packing and moving of over 20,000 artifacts began in January of 2009. Inventorying, packing, and moving began on the second floor in preparation for the contract. At that time, the second floor still contained most of the artifacts left by the Trumans. Once the home was closed, the curatorial staff began precisely documenting the location of furniture and other artifacts from all floors in the home wherever there was a chance of damage either by the actual construction work or collateral falling debris.

²⁴³ Memorandum, Superintendent, Harry S Truman NHS to Contracting Officer, MWRO, March 18, 2008; files of Harry S Truman NHS, D52.

²⁴⁴ Al O’Bright compiled a remarkably valuable journal of progress on the combined HVAC, fire suppression, plaster repair, and wallpaper conservation projects, from early contracting and design work through the construction process itself, extending from January 2008 to August 2010. The log reveals both the steps in the process, along with the concerns and frustrations of coordinating the approval, funding, review, and on-site construction aspects of the inter-related projects. Now contained in O’Bright’s HVAC project files, which were turned over to the files of the Harry S Truman NHS.

The items that could have been impacted by the construction were then removed and brought to the offsite curatorial facility for temporary storage. The combined projects of HVAC installation, fire suppression/sprinkler system installation, plaster repair, and wallpaper conservation, worked simultaneously on a very tight schedule, was extremely complicated and required an intensive mobilization process at a time when, despite the inflow of project-specific funds through the Centennial Initiative, the budget also remained tight. As Chief of Cultural Resources Carol Dage recalled, “I tell you, everybody worked together. I mean, we had vehicles, we were transporting stuff—we didn’t have the money to get the moving vans or to hire the people, so everybody worked together, volunteers, staff, everybody.”²⁴⁵ In addition, MWAC was asked to provide archeological monitoring assistance and additional geophysical investigations for the new water lines being installed underground between the city water supply and the home for the sprinkler system.²⁴⁶

Work on the project began with a pre-construction conference on October 15, 2009. While the work was progressing, Tom Edmondson of Heugh-Edmondson Conservation Services, LLC, removed the original wallpaper from several rooms, cleaning and restoring it, later re-attaching it to the walls. Wallpaper removal allowed for an examination of the underlying wall surfaces that had not been possible before and that revealed additional areas of plaster deterioration, particularly in the Dining Room (Room 110), Study (Room 109), Living Room (Room 104), and first-floor Gates Bedroom (Room 105). Repairing those spaces, Dage asserted in a request to MWRO for assistance in allocating funds, would allow staff to make additional strides in bringing the Truman Home from Fair to Good Condition.²⁴⁷ The contractor quickly provided a proposal for the extra plaster work, which O’Bright approved in December 2009 in time for the funds to be obligated by December 31.²⁴⁸ Work progressed quickly through the winter of 2009-2010, with floor removal for duct work and for the installation of sprinkler heads all coordinated with the plaster restoration specialist, Andy Ladygo. The work also included reinforcing the first floor from the basement while ducts were being installed and repairing a hole in the second floor ceiling when a contractor inadvertently stepped through the attic flooring. The HVAC and fire suppression systems were largely in place by April 2010, which for the first time extended HVAC to the second floor and the attic. The final air and water pressure tests were conducted in May 2010. Work on the project was completed in time for the Truman Home to open for tours on May 28, 2010.²⁴⁹

²⁴⁵ Carol Dage, oral history interview, January 7, 2016.

²⁴⁶ See Press Release, “National Park Service Announces Temporary Closure of the Truman Home,” October 7, 2009; email, James Loach, MWRO to Patty Rooney, MWRO et al., October 5, 2009; email, Carol Dage, Harry S Truman NHS to Steve DeVore, MWAC et al., October 8, 2009; files of Harry S Truman NHS. Letter report for the archeological monitoring: Archeologist, Midwest Archeological Center to Manager, Midwest Archeological Center, December 7, 2009; files of Harry S Truman NHS, H2623. See also Steven L. De Vore and William E. Altizer. *Geophysical and Archeological Investigations at Harry S Truman National Historic Site, in Independence, Missouri*. Midwest Archeological Technical Report No. 117. Lincoln, Nebraska: National Park Service, 2009.

²⁴⁷ Email, Carol Dage, Harry S Truman NHS to Diane Vanderzanden, MWRO, et al., November 5, 2009; files of Harry S Truman NHS. See also email, Al O’Bright, MWRO to Carol Dage, Harry S Truman NHS, November 13, 2009, with cost estimates; files of Harry S Truman NHS.

²⁴⁸ Email, Al O’Bright, MWRO to Diana Vanderzanden, MWRO et al., December 18, 2009.

²⁴⁹ O’Bright, journal of HVAC work, files of Harry S Truman NHS.

Carriage House

The principal focus of early efforts at the Truman Home was the main home itself, the epicenter of the Trumans' lives in Independence that was so remarkable for its intact state. The carriage house, which had been a part of the Gates' property from the nineteenth century, was initially considered only as protection for the largest of the home's artifacts, Mr. Truman's 1972 Chrysler Newport automobile, and as maintenance workshop for the park. By May 1983, however, Ketterson, in his early planning for funds, identified the need to stabilize the carriage house which "shows evidence of some structural problems."²⁵⁰ Work to fix the carriage house's structural problems would have to wait, however, until the Truman Home was made ready for its public opening in May 1984.

The first structural assessment of the carriage house was performed in July 1985. The engineer who performed the assessment described the carriage house as a timber-framed building of 6x6 and 8x8 wood structural members with two bays on the ground floor and a loft space above. The loft, he said, was of different heights over each bay, suggesting different eras of construction, and the tenuous connection between the two sections suggested structural instability. The evaluation found evidence of dry rot and termite damage in the wooden posts, particularly where the sheathing was in direct contact with the ground. The assessment recommended installing additional bracing within the carriage house to provide lateral stability, grading around the base of the carriage house to remove contact with soil and provide better drainage, reconstructing a portion of the foundation, and providing temporary vertical support within the loft.²⁵¹ Later that summer, Superintendent Reigle submitted a proposal to stabilize the carriage house, including repainting, replacing the cedar shake roof, installing electricity, and repairing structural members; the work was approved in late October 1985.²⁵²

Before beginning the proposed structural improvements, however, MWRO Historical Architect Al O'Bright and Exhibit Specialist Don La Deaux more closely examined the carriage house foundation in December 1985. In their report, which was available in draft form by January 1986 and finalized in April, they more clearly described the deterioration that had resulted from the build-up of soil around the carriage house, affecting the siding, foundation sills, and structural post bases. The foundation sills suffered further deterioration as a result of the concrete floor, which was poured after the building had been constructed and partially covered the sills. Once the concrete floor was placed, the foundation trapped water at the wood sills. In some areas, O'Bright and Le Deaux speculated, the steel garage door track channels were providing much of the building's structural stability since many of the posts had no foundation beneath them.

²⁵⁰ "Costs for Activating Harry S Truman NHS," undated MS attached to Memorandum, Ranger-in-Charge, Harry S Truman to Superintendent, Jefferson NEM, July 18, 1983; files of Harry S Truman NHS, H3015.

²⁵¹ Lawrence S. Graham, P.E., Harper and Kerr Consulting Structural Engineers, to Al O'Bright, MWRO, July 26, 1985; files of Harry S Truman NHS.

²⁵² Attached to Memorandum, Superintendent, Harry S Truman to Regional Director, MWRO, August 23, 1985; files of Harry S Truman NHS, D22.

The report strongly recommended repairing the foundation, but, given the guideline to preserve all materials intact from the period of the Trumans' ownership, the concrete slab floor would have to remain. Instead, the report recommended "that a partial concrete sill be slipped beneath each structural post in place of a wooden sill." In addition, the existing post bases should be repaired using structural epoxy and fiberglass rods.²⁵³

Funding for the work was approved in late 1986, and O'Bright prepared construction documents in the winter and spring of 1987. In August 1987, the work was awarded to American Restoration and Construction Corporation of Kansas City.²⁵⁴ The pre-construction conference was held at the Truman Home on September 24, 1987, with work beginning on September 29.²⁵⁵ Work took longer than expected, and Harry S Truman NHS Facility Manager Mike Healy approved an extension of the contract on May 31, 1988.²⁵⁶ The project was made more complex by the decision by MWRO staff to enhance the structural stability of the carriage house by means of structural epoxy. In order to do this work, MWRO historical architects and restoration specialists, assisted by Facility Manager Mike Healy, removed, labeled, and set aside portions of the siding, then installed temporary shoring beams and joists. On the faces of each of the vertical posts that had been covered by the siding, the crew cut a notch, and cleaned out the decayed interior with an electric chain saw and rotary rasp. The beam was then underlain by a reinforced concrete beam, after which the crews extended a 2x4 from the beam to the vertical post and connected them by means of a fiberglass rod. With this base in place, the crews directed the epoxy into the cavities by means of sheet metal forms, to stabilize the vertical posts and prevent further decay. In line with the earlier structural engineering assessment, cross bracing was then added between the structural posts. While this was taking place, the contractors worked to replace deteriorated siding and trim, repair doors and windows, replace the wood shingle roof, and paint the exterior.²⁵⁷

The repairs performed in 1987 and 1988 proved durable, and the carriage house required little work once they were complete. By the late 1990s, however, the wood shingle roof that had been installed in 1987 was leaking and allowing water to enter the building. In 2000, the park contracted to have the wooden shingles replaced, a project that was undertaken jointly with having a new roof installed on the Truman Farm Home in Grandview (see Chapter 7 for additional information on this project). In 2001, meanwhile, lead paint was discovered on the carriage house, and plans were prepared to

²⁵³ "Physical Investigation Report & Treatment Proposal: Truman Carriage House (HS-2) Foundation, Harry S Truman National Historic Site," authorized April 9, 1986; files of Harry S Truman NHS. See also Memorandum, Superintendent, Harry S Truman to Regional Director, MWRO, January 30, 1986; Midwest Region Cultural Resources Archive, H3015.

²⁵⁴ Construction Contract Project Check List, FY 87; Al O'Bright files, Harry S Truman NHS.

²⁵⁵ Memorandum, Contracting Officer, MWRO to Superintendent, Harry S Truman, October 8, 1987; Midwest Region Cultural Resources Archive, H30.

²⁵⁶ Memorandum, Contracting Officers Representative, Harry S Truman to Chief, Contracting and Property Management, June 14, 1988; files of Harry S Truman NHS, D52.

²⁵⁷ Al O'Bright, "In-Situ Epoxy Stabilization of Timber Posts: A Case Study. Truman Carriage House, Harry S Truman National Historic Site," draft article prepared for Association for Preservation Technology Conference, 1989; Al O'Bright files, Harry S Truman NHS.

remove and dispose of it. The funds were not available until 2003, however, when work took place during early August.²⁵⁸

The List of Classified Structures (LCS) for Harry S Truman NHS currently includes thirteen resources on the Truman Home lot, most of the minor items such as a gas lamp, historical marker, walkways, and remains of foundations and a cistern. Only two buildings are on the LCS, the Truman Home and the carriage house, identified as HS01 and HS02, respectively. Structure number HS03 is the steel fence, built in 1949 to encircle the Truman's lot as a way to maintain their security. The fence has remained in place, frequently to the consternation of passers-by who would like an unobstructed photograph of the home, though largely unnoticed and in the background. In the summer of 1993, however, the fence arrived front and center to the driver of a car who crashed into it. The damaged section of fence was retained in the hope that it could be straightened for reuse. This proved impossible, however, and a new section of fence was constructed in 1995 by Iron Craft of Kansas City to replace the damaged section in-kind.²⁵⁹

The objective of all projects at the Truman Home has been to retain as much original fabric as possible from the time when the Trumans' lived in it. The lengths to which park staff and MWRO historical architects and restoration specialists went to preserve these materials is remarkable and allows the Truman Home to look like the Trumans still live there, an appropriate context for the intact collection of the Truman's household goods. This meticulous care and attention to the details of the original materials allows visitors to the Truman Home to understand how the Trumans lived in Independence after Harry Truman's time in office as president. When they returned to Independence from Washington, D.C. in early 1953, however, they moved back not just into their home on North Delaware, but into the company of their friends and family in the surrounding neighborhood. Three homes in particular helped to form their closest circle: the Frank and George Wallace Homes behind their house, and the Noland Home across the street. Each of these homes became part of the Harry S Truman NHS in 1990, and have required varying levels of management ever since. The following chapter discusses the efforts made to acquire and develop these three properties.

²⁵⁸ Memorandum, Superintendent, Harry S Truman NHS to Billy Davis, Contracting Officer, MWRO, August 1, 2001; files of Harry S Truman NHS, D52, Truman Home Contract. See also Log of Construction, Lead Abatement-Carriage House, August 5, 2003.

²⁵⁹ Memorandum, Acting Associate Regional Director, Planning and Resource Preservation, MWRO to Regional Chief, Division of Contracting and Property Management, MWRO, April 14, 1995; Midwest Region Cultural Resources Archive, S7417.

Chapter 6: First Site Expansion: George Wallace, Frank Wallace, and Noland Homes

The singular importance of the Truman's home at 219 North Delaware, with its intact collection of household furnishings that give an irreplaceable view into the private lives of Harry and Bess Truman, was, and remains, at the center of the public's and NPS' attention at Harry S Truman NHS. Even during early years of implementing the park, however, many people both inside and outside NPS recognized that the story of Harry S Truman during his post-presidential years in Independence was incomplete without an understanding of the close network of family and neighbors with whom he interacted daily. During his frequent morning walks, his visits, and his business throughout the city, Truman interacted constantly with his extended family and with his neighbors, all of whom relished the close connection to the Trumans and helped to protect their privacy. During the process of writing and reviewing the inaugural General Management Plan (GMP), outlined in Chapter 4, NPS planners initially considered a substantial expansion of the park's boundary in an attempt to protect more of the neighborhood from deterioration and demolition. This broader expansion fueled powerful opposition from local residents and NPS officials in Washington, D.C., and elsewhere. Park and MWRO officials were determined to protect the neighborhood context surrounding the Truman Home, however, and reached a compromise that consisted of a smaller expansion of the Truman Home NHS boundary to include only three adjacent homes with family connections: the two small bungalows immediately behind the Truman Home on West Truman Road and the large Queen Anne house across North Delaware from the Truman Home. Nearly all who commented negatively on the broader protection alternatives of the 1987 GMP recognized the validity and importance of extending NPS protection to the homes of family members who were closest to the Trumans, both in affinity and geographically.

As recounted in Chapter 2, Missouri's Congressional delegation acted quickly after release of the final GMP. Rep. Alan Wheat approached NPS Director William Penn Mott in 1988, requesting assistance in drafting legislation that would add the George and May Wallace Home and the Frank and Natalie Wallace Home, at 605 and 601 West Truman Road respectively, and the Noland Home at 216 North Delaware, to the Harry S Truman NHS. Wheat co-sponsored the initial legislation in October 1988 with Rep. Ike Skelton, and again in January 1989 with thirty-eight co-sponsors. While Director Mott suggested to the House in his testimony that only the Noland Home should be acquired in fee simple, and that the two Wallace homes should, instead, be covered by protective easements, the House subcommittee called for fee simple acquisition of all three with the offer of life occupancy for the residents. After passage by the House in April 1989, the Senate heard testimony on the bill in July 1989, again affirming the fee simple acquisition of all three homes. The Senate passed the bill, with an appropriation of \$250,000 to purchase the homes, on September 12, 1989; President George H.W. Bush then signed the bill into law on October 2, 1989.

Acquisitions

The bill that authorized NPS to expand the Harry S Truman NHS by acquiring the two Wallace homes and the Noland Home did not specify a time frame. Indeed, the provisions for life occupancy suggested a potentially long lead time before the homes were developed for inclusion in the park. Events conspired at all three homes, however, to bring them into NPS possession earlier than anticipated. In fact, with regard to the Noland Home, its acquisition came before NPS was able to fully develop plans for it, particularly given its condition and need for significant rehabilitation. Within two years of the bill's passage, all three homes were owned in fee simple by NPS and were active parts of the Harry S Truman NHS.

The first home to be acquired, and the one with the easiest route to federal ownership, was the Frank Wallace Home. Frank and Natalie Wallace's home was built at 601 West Truman Road in 1915, after their grandparents, George and Elizabeth Gates, sold them the lot at a price that was essentially a gift. They lived there from then until 1960, when both Frank and Natalie died, Natalie in May and Frank in August. The couple had no children, and when they died, ownership of the home was divided among four cousins, including Margaret Truman Daniel. Both the Trumans and their in-laws, George and May Wallace, who lived next door, wanted to keep the home within the family. Since all four cousins then lived far from Independence, they agreed in 1962 to sell their respective interests to the Trumans and Wallaces, who each acquired a one-half interest. The Trumans and Wallaces rented the Frank Wallace Home beginning in late 1960 to a succession of individuals and couples until 1972. A medical corpsman lived in the home throughout 1972, when Mr. Truman needed medical care before his death in December. In early 1973, Doris Hecker began renting the home after the Trumans and Wallaces declined to sell it to her. Ms. Hecker became close to her neighbor, Mrs. Wallace, over the next decade, helping her as May aged and became more infirm. In 1989, likely in gratitude for the help over the years, May Wallace signed a quit-claim deed for her half-interest in the home to Ms. Hecker.²⁶⁰

Ms. Hecker died in early January 1990, barely three months after the legislation passed that authorized NPS to expand the Harry S Truman NHS boundary. Harry S Truman NHS staff were, therefore, immediately faced with beginning the process of acquiring the Frank Wallace Home from her heirs. Interest in the home at that time was divided between Ms. Hecker's estate and Margaret Truman Daniel, who had inherited her parents' half-interest. An appraisal shortly after Ms. Hecker's death valued the home at \$54,000, and, in March 1990, Regional Chief of Land Resources Division Frederick L. Meyer extended an offer to purchase the home for this amount to attorneys for Mrs. Daniel and Ms. Hecker's estate. Both attorneys accepted the offer in the spring and early

²⁶⁰ Gail E.H. Evans-Hatch and D. Michael Evans-Hatch, *Farm Roots and Family Ties: Historic Resource Study, The Harry S Truman Grandview Farm, the Wallace Houses, and the Noland House in Independence* (Omaha, NE, 2001), 246-49. See also record of telephone conversation between Research Historian Ron Cockrell, MWRO, and Doris Hecker, December 13, 1986; files of MWRO, H22.



Figure 28. May Wallace, 1989. Photo provided by Harry S Truman NHS.

summer of 1990, and the sale closed on September 24, 1990, with deeds executed in October 1990.²⁶¹

The process of acquiring the George Wallace Home, located between the Frank Wallace Home and the Truman Home, began at nearly the same time and also earlier than expected. George P. Wallace and his wife, Mary (May) Wallace, were given the lot in 1916, and had their home built in the same year. George Wallace died in May 1963, and his wife continued to live alone in the home next door to her in-laws, the Trumans (Figure 28).²⁶² Mrs. Wallace became incapacitated in late 1989 and was hospitalized. Her attorney approached NPS at the beginning of January 1990 about selling the property. Given her medical needs, however, her attorney insisted that she would need to receive full value from the premises.²⁶³ An appraisal prepared for NPS suggested a value of \$50,000 for the home, and, in March 1990, Chief of the Land Resources Division Meyer extended an offer to Mrs. Wallace's attorney for that amount.²⁶⁴ In reply, the attorney announced his intention to get a second appraisal. In June 1990, he informed NPS that the value of the home, with the interior furnishings included, was \$65,000. This higher value

²⁶¹ Frederick L. Meyer, MWRO to Brian L. Warr, March 2, 1990; Linda Larison, MWRO to Roger W. Hershey, March 13, 1990; Brian L. Warr to Frederick L. Meyer, April 26, 1990; Purchaser's Closing Statement, September 24, 1990; Frederick L. Meyer to Brian L. Warr and Roger W. Hershey, October 22, 1990; files of Harry S Truman NHS, L1425, Tract 101-04.

²⁶² Evans-Hatch, *Farm Roots and Family Ties*, 267-69.

²⁶³ John S. Newhouse to Don H. Castleberry, MWRO, January 2, 1990; files of Harry S Truman NHS.

²⁶⁴ Meyer to Newhouse, March 2, 1990; files of Harry S Truman NHS, L1425 (MWR-MLRD).

was justified, the attorney argued, because of the home's intimate connection to the Trumans and proximity to the Trumans' former home.²⁶⁵ Real estate officials with MWRO iterated over the summer of 1990 that they did not have authority to make an offer higher than their appraisal of \$50,000, even when Mrs. Wallace's power of attorney made a counter-offer of \$60,000 without the furnishings. Making an offer beyond the NPS appraisal, MWRO officials asserted, would require Congressional approval.

Superintendent Ron Mack wrote a letter of justification to encourage the sale at the higher amount, arguing the vital importance of the Wallace home to interpretation of the Truman Home, and detailing the role its acquisition played in the recent GMP. He also explained that the George Wallace Home was important to the administration of the park, "which is presently in need of on-site visitor and staff support facilities, as existing office facilities to support the park operations are inadequate."²⁶⁶ This justification was required should the parties seek Congressional approval, but all were concerned about the time that might elapse while that approval was pursued. In discussions between NPS and Mrs. Wallace's power of attorney in late summer and early fall of 1990, the two sides agreed that the most expeditious course was for NPS to begin condemnation proceedings, in which a court could call for the sale of the home at the higher amount of \$60,000, thus bypassing the need for Congressional authorization. The Midwest Regional Office sought approval from NPS headquarters in Washington, D.C., to begin condemnation proceedings, which was granted in December 1990. The condemnation paperwork was then prepared by MWRO for approval by Department of the Interior's Regional Solicitor for the Rocky Mountain Region in March 1991, and condemnation proceedings were filed in May 1991. The Assistant U.S. Attorney responded to the Regional Solicitor by stating an offer of \$60,000, which NPS approved. The U.S. District Court for the Western District of Missouri then issued a Judgment of Stipulation in July 1991, ordering condemnation, with compensation set at \$60,000. The check from the Assistant U.S. Attorney's office was sent to Mrs. Wallace's power of attorney in September 1991, and the park took possession of the home on October 22, 1991.²⁶⁷

In early 1990, as initial negotiations regarding the two Wallace Homes were taking place, NPS initiated discussions with the owners of the Noland Home, across North Delaware from the Truman Home. This was the home of Harry Truman's cousins, Nellie and Ethel Noland, his close companions while he was courting Bess Wallace across the street. Their friendship continued through the Trumans early married life and

²⁶⁵ Ronald G. Byers to Paul R. Kausch, Jr., MWRO, March 22, 1990; Byers to Kausch, June 11, 1990; files of Harry S Truman NHS.

²⁶⁶ Memorandum, Superintendent, Harry S Truman to Regional Director, MWRO, August 16, 1990; files of Harry S Truman NHS, L14.

²⁶⁷ Byers to Frederick L. Meyer, MWRO, August 3, 1990; Byers to Meyer, September 17, 1990; Kausch to Byers, November 2, 1990; Director, NPS to Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife and Parks, December 18, 1990; Memorandum, Chief, Land Resources Division to Regional Solicitor, Rocky Mountain Division, March 8, 1991; Assistant Regional Solicitor, DOI, Denver Region to Attorney General Richard L. Thornburgh, March 20, 1991; Vernon A. Poschel, Assistant United States Attorney to Albert V. Witham, Assistant Regional Solicitor, May 9, 1991; Amended Judgment on Stipulation and Order of Distribution, United States District Court for the Western District of Missouri, Western Division, filed July 29, 1991; Pochel to Byers, September 10, 1991; files of Harry S Truman NHS, L1525.

after the Trumans returned from Washington, D.C., in 1953. Nellie died in 1958, and Ethel died in 1971. One of the Noland's nieces, and a second cousin to Harry Truman, Ardis Haukenberry, who had also grown up in the home after her father died in 1904, inherited and returned to the family home on North Delaware in 1973. She was an important source of Truman family lore, particularly after the deaths of Ethel Noland and Harry Truman. Ardis Haukenberry died in November 1986, and the home was inherited by her nephew, John Tilford Southern and his wife, Dawna, who rented it to others.²⁶⁸

By 1990, the home was in poor condition due to a lack of maintenance for many years. An appraisal prepared for NPS in May 1990 suggested a value of \$37,500, which reflected the condition, and MWRO submitted an offer of that amount to the Southern in July 1990.²⁶⁹ The attorney for the Southern commissioned a separate appraisal, which resulted in a valuation of \$60,000. The attorney suggested meeting halfway between the two appraisals, for a purchase price of \$48,750.²⁷⁰ As with the concurrent negotiations with May Wallace for the George Wallace Home, the only way for the sellers to get their price, which NPS did not contest, was through condemnation. Acting Director of NPS David L. Moffitt agreed in November 1990, with concurrence from the Assistant Secretary of Fish and Wildlife and Parks the following month.²⁷¹ The two actions made their way through the U.S. District Court for the Western District of Missouri concurrently, and a stipulation for purchase price of \$47,000 for the Noland Home was filed in July 1991. The check cleared in early September 1991, and the sale closed on September 19, 1991.²⁷²

Renovations: George Wallace Home

Both the George Wallace Home, which is immediately east of the Truman Home, and the Frank Wallace Home, which is next door, to the east of the George Wallace Home, came to NPS in apparent good condition. In part because neither home appeared to require immediate rehabilitation, NPS did not prepare a Historic Structure Report (HSR) for either home. Instead, NPS arranged for a set of measured drawings of each house by HABS architects Ellyn P. Goldkind and Mark J. Cutone, which were completed in 1992. Each set included plan views of the basement, first floor, and roof; all four elevation views; a section view; and typical details of windows, doors, sills, and moldings.²⁷³ The intended use for each home was occupancy by NPS staff rather than as house museums or display spaces. The George Wallace Home was intended to serve as office space for park interpretive staff, and the Frank Wallace Home was intended to

²⁶⁸ Evans-Hatch, *Farm Roots and Family Ties*, 200-207.

²⁶⁹ Frederick L. Meyer, MWRO to Fred Dannov, July 25, 1990; files of Harry S Truman NHS, L1425 (MWR-MLRD).

²⁷⁰ Fred Dannov, handwritten memo to Frederick L. Meyer, September 10, 1990, files of Harry S Truman NHS.

²⁷¹ Acting Director, NPS to Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife and Parks, November 27, 1990; files of Harry S Truman NHS, L1425.

²⁷² Ticor Title Insurance Company, Schedule A, Title Insurance, October 17, 1991; files of Harry S Truman NHS.

²⁷³ Scans of HABS drawings for the Frank Wallace Home can be found online at <http://www.loc.gov/pictures/collection/hh/item/mo1222/>; the George Wallace Home drawings are at <http://www.loc.gov/pictures/collection/hh/item/mo1223/>.

provide residential housing for a Park Ranger, in particular, one with law-enforcement responsibilities. Before these uses were possible, however, and despite the decision not to prepare historic structure reports for the homes, physical investigations into the homes revealed that both needed extensive renovation before they could be used as intended.

The most immediate need at the George Wallace Home was asbestos abatement, identified as early as November 1992 when Mack requested funds from MWRO. In October 1993, the Superintendent again requested funds for the removal of asbestos, noting in particular the condition of the original gravity furnace that remained in the basement. The furnace ducts were covered with asbestos insulation, he explained, which made the furnace unusable. As a result of not being able to use the furnace, moisture accumulated in the home and mildew established itself on interior surfaces. He noted further in his request for funds that plans for FY94 anticipated rehabilitating the building for office use, including rewiring, replacing the fuse box, removing and replacing bathroom tile, and installing a new HVAC system.²⁷⁴ Funds were approved and the asbestos successfully abated in 1994, and, in May 1995, Superintendent Ken Apschnikat announced plans to move the Park Ranger station from the Truman Home basement to the George Wallace Home. Much of the renovation work had been done at that point, though the Superintendent was still awaiting funds and technical assistance to replace the HVAC system.²⁷⁵ Work on the furnace replacement at the George Wallace Home led to a particularly curious incident and curatorial conundrum. Part of the basement was an unfinished crawl space which park staff explored prior to beginning any work on the furnace. This examination, already difficult because of the presence of asbestos, revealed the presence of several hundred largely unbroken, gin and whiskey bottles stashed in the back of the crawl space. The bottles belonged to George Wallace, who was a “tinkerer” and had a workshop in his basement adjacent to the crawlspace. As Chief of Facilities Management Michele Cefola recalled, she and Chief Curator Carol Dage “had to go in there, and don Tyvek suits, respirators, gloves, and we had to pull out all those bottles because they were historic fabric. . . . we had to put some plywood down and crawl in there on our stomachs, and we had to gingerly remove each bottle.”²⁷⁶ A representative sample of the liquor bottles is now stored in the park’s curatorial facility. The remainder were recycled.

Although much of the major rehabilitation work at the park was conducted under contract, beginning in the 1990s a larger portion of the repair work was performed by park staff.²⁷⁷ For instance, the George Wallace Home roof needed to be replaced, but the park had only \$10,000 for the work, which was inadequate to hire a roofing contractor, so the staff undertook the roof replacement in-house in May 1998. The work was complicated by the presence of asphalt shingles installed on top of the original wood

²⁷⁴ Memorandum, Superintendent, Harry S Truman to Regional Director, MWRO, November 12, 1992; files of Harry S Truman NHS, D22. See also Memorandum, Superintendent, Harry S Truman to Regional Director, MWRO, October 21, 1993; files of Harry S Truman NHS, D50.

²⁷⁵ Memorandum, Acting Superintendent, Harry S Truman to Regional Director, MWRO, May 19, 1995; files of Harry S Truman NHS, D50.

²⁷⁶ Michele Cefola, oral history interview, March 2, 2016.

²⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, notes that she began conducting more work in-house after starting work in 1990.

shingles, all of which had to be removed.²⁷⁸ Other than minor repair work, however, the roof replacement was the last substantial project at the George Wallace Home until planning for major renovations began in 2010. The single-bay garage, though, saw work in 2005. The park secured funds to remove the lead paint from the garage exterior, which was completed in the spring of 2005. In the process of lead paint abatement, however, park maintenance staff discovered that the garage rested on a foundation of railroad ties, which were fast deteriorating. With little funds available for a major renovation project, Woodcrafter Lewis McMarnin improvised: “I took our trailer, the utility trailer, and opened the door [of the garage], and backed it in, and I jacked that building up and supported it on that trailer, and then pulled it forward, and then I put a foundation under it.”²⁷⁹

The garage gave park staff a foretaste of the George Wallace Home’s foundation, which was in poor condition and bowing badly. As Al O’Bright recalled, foundations under both of the Wallace homes “were just abysmal. They were only six-inch concrete unreinforced—with no footings, and they were just going down.”²⁸⁰ As early as 2006, MWRO and park staff sought funds to replace the George Wallace Home foundation, but none were available. Finally, in April 2010, O’Bright prepared a Scope of Work for extensive renovations to the George Wallace Home and requested assistance from Susan Richards Johnson Associates (SRJA), which had already been selected for an Indefinite Delivery/Indefinite Quantity (IDIQ) contract by MWRO. SRJA served as the prime Architect/Engineering (AE) consultant and prepared a proposal in September 2010 that was dramatically higher in cost than the government estimate. The higher cost was due, in part, to difficulties expected by SRJA regarding working within the historic landscape that had not been anticipated by MWRO. At the request of MWRO, the firm revised its cost proposal, however, and began planning and design work in the fall of 2010.²⁸¹

The design and planning team, including SRJA and Historical Architect Al O’Bright, encountered several problems developing the project and executing it once plans were completed. In December 2010, for example, early investigations identified that the sewer line from the Truman Home ran underneath both the George Wallace Home and the Frank Wallace Home. This arrangement created potential problems for excavating the existing foundation of the George Wallace Home and preparing footings for a new one.²⁸² In the course of preparing the design documents, SRJA determined that water, resulting from poor drainage, was the root cause of the foundation’s failure and

²⁷⁸ Ibid., see also Lewis McKarnin, oral history interview, February 4, 2016.

²⁷⁹ Lewis McKarnin, oral history interview, February 4, 2016. See also Preconstruction Meeting Notes, George Wallace Garage Lead Paint Abatement, March 29, 2005; files of Harry S Truman NHS, Al O’Bright files.

²⁸⁰ Al O’Bright, oral history interview, January 27, 2016.

²⁸¹ Email, Al O’Bright to Carol Dage, April 1, 2010; email, Al O’Bright to Joanne Six, April 19, 2010; email, Al O’Bright to Joanne Six, June 24, 2010; email, Al O’Bright to Diana Vanderzanden, July 9, 2010; Al O’Bright to Diana Vanderzanden, September 16, 2010; O’Bright to Vanderzanden, handwritten note, September 22, 2010; email, Susan Richards Johnson to Diana Vanderzanden, September 29, 2010; files of Harry S Truman NHS, Al O’Bright files.

²⁸² Email, Al O’Bright to Angie Gaebler, December 9, 2010; files of Harry S Truman NHS, Al O’Bright files.

designed a perimeter surface drainage system to direct water away from the home. In this design, however, the existing sewer line beneath the home would remain in place. Following a value analysis conference in March 2011, when these issues were discussed and a preferred solution determined, SRJA presented a draft design document in June 2011, incorporating the decisions of the value analysis. The plans were approved by MWRO in August 2011, with an estimated cost of \$694,628.²⁸³ The following month, however, Facility Operations Specialist Greg Wolcott and other park staff noticed that the front porch of the George Wallace Home was unstable, and was pulling away from the home “causing bricks from the column to fall.” O’Bright noted that a structural engineer would need to be involved, which would take time and additional contract process; however, MWRO Cyclic and Repair Rehab Funding Manager Sharon Busch had already committed an additional \$150,000 to the project during the value analysis meeting, which allowed flexibility.²⁸⁴ With the final design documents, without the additional porch structural work, completed by November 2011, the construction drawings and specifications were then completed in the spring of 2012. A Request For Proposal (RFP) was issued for the work. In July 2012 RB Construction Company of Sterling Heights, Michigan won the project, which included foundation replacement, foundation and site drainage system, lead and asbestos abatement, window repairs, HVAC repairs, plumbing and electrical work, and site restoration. The contractor’s proposed budget for the work was \$872,000.²⁸⁵ This was substantially higher than the initial government estimate of approximately \$640,000. In negotiations with NPS through the summer of 2012 the contractor lowered the proposal to \$811,000. In his analysis of the revised proposal in August 2012, O’Bright pointed out that MWRO had provided an additional \$200,000, which would cover the contractor’s final estimate.²⁸⁶

Work on the project began in November 2012 and started with stripping and removing the interior paint the next month. In January 2013, however, the contractors identified evidence of mold beneath the historic wallpapers. The primary mold locations were in the basement and attic. With construction costs already up to \$1 million, there was no room in the budget at that time for mold remediation. Restoration work, therefore, turned to the exterior, where more surprises awaited. In April 2013, excavation surrounding the back porch revealed the sources of deterioration: a brick drain and trough. Excavation was halted while archeologists and engineers examined the underground structure. Early investigations failed to identify the source of water in the brick trough, but, by early summer, all the sewer and water issues were resolved, and the house was raised off the foundation so that the new foundation could be placed. With the home back on its new foundation in August 2013, work continued on the interior, including installation of a new HVAC system (Figure 29).

²⁸³ Memorandum, Acting Chairman, Development Advisory Board, MWRO to Regional Director, MWRO, August 9, 2011; files of Harry S Truman NHS, Al O’Bright files

²⁸⁴ Email, Greg Wolcott to Larry Villalva et al., September 8, 2011; email, O’Bright to Villalva, September 9, 2011; files of Harry S Truman NHS, Al O’Bright files.

²⁸⁵ Solicitation, Offer, and Award, Solicitation No. P12PS30594, issued May 29, 2012; files of Harry S Truman NHS, Al O’Bright files.

²⁸⁶ Email, Al O’Bright to Diana Vanderzanden, August 16, 2012; files of Harry S Truman NHS, Al O’Bright files.



Figure 29. George Wallace Home following basement reconstruction, 2013. Photo by Susan R. Johnson Associates, provided by Harry S Truman NHS.

Although all the work of the original scope of work was completed by the winter of 2014, the issue of mold which arose during the initial work remained unsolved for lack of funds. The home was mothballed in late 2013. Under Superintendent Dage, however, funds for mold remediation became available in late 2015, with work scheduled to begin in early 2016. Once complete, park interpretive staff will resume working from the newly renovated George Wallace Home.²⁸⁷

Renovation: Frank Wallace Home

Although the Frank Wallace Home is nearly identical in scale, style, and age to its next-door neighbor, the George Wallace Home, its course of renovation is more similar to the Noland Home on the other side of North Delaware. While the Frank Wallace Home also had significant structural issues, it was joined to the Noland Home during its most significant work, the replacement of the foundation, under a single contract and contractor, who concurrently replaced the foundation of the Noland Home. Its similarity to the George Wallace Home comes primarily in its intended use: the George Wallace Home was intended to serve as office space for the park's interpretive staff, and the Frank

²⁸⁷ Carol Dage, oral history interview, January 7, 2016.

Wallace Home was programmed as living quarters for a Ranger, preferably one with law-enforcement credentials, who could provide additional security for the Truman Home.

When it came into NPS control, the Frank Wallace Home was in comparatively good condition. Unlike the George Wallace Home, it had no known asbestos issues. The most important early renovation consisted of replacing the roof. As discussed earlier with regard to the George Wallace Home, the park had very limited funding for roof replacement of each home, and park maintenance staff, led by Facility Manager Michele Cefola, conducted the work for both homes in-house. With the new roof in place and other minor repair and maintenance activities completed, the Frank Wallace Home was ready for occupancy by a law-enforcement Ranger in 1993. The first occupant was Regina Klein. As a result, in 2000, the City of Independence sought to enforce a \$25 occupational license charge on NPS as a landlord of rental property. Superintendent James Sanders in reply to the request for payment explained that the law enforcement Ranger was required to live in the quarters as a condition of employment, and that, combined with the fact that NPS is exempt from local licensing and taxing requirements, meant that the occupational license charge did not apply. The city did not pursue the matter.²⁸⁸

In the early 2000s, park maintenance staff completed other projects, including replacing the existing storm door, replacing the original kitchen cabinet with one from approximately the same time period, and installing a range hood. Unfortunately, these small projects were undertaken without submitting a “XXX” form, which initiates consultation under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act for any material changes to historic properties listed or eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. Superintendent James Sanders sought approval for the work after the fact, but Regional Director explained that was not possible, given the nature of the changes to the historic fabric of the home.²⁸⁹

More substantial work was planned for July 2002, when the park contracted for abatement of lead-based paint in the home. Ranger John Gaven, recently hired, had moved into the home, and needed to be relocated for the duration of the work. There had been very limited coordination for the work, as neither Curator Carol Dage nor Historical Architect Al O’Bright were consulted before the pre-bid site visit. The project also had not been through the Section 106 review process. At the pre-bid meeting among the prospective contractors, Facility Manager Joe Cannon, and Superintendent James Sanders in July 2002, the contractor suggested that a strip of the original wallpaper, approximately six inches wide, be removed from beneath the ceiling trim because of potential for the chemical treatment of the ceiling trim to drip and damage the wallpaper. Dage was then consulted and urged Sanders to submit the proposed work to MWRO for Section 106 consultation and also involve Historical Architect Al O’Bright. She additionally suggested that Tom Edmondson, the historic wallpaper specialist who had

²⁸⁸ James A. Sanders, Harry S Truman NHS to Terry Hartwig, City of Independence, May 31, 2000; files of Harry S Truman NHS, A38.

²⁸⁹ Memorandum, Acting Regional Director, MWRO to Superintendent, Harry S Truman, April 1, 2001; files of MWRO, H4217.

already worked extensively at the Truman Home, should become involved in this project as well. Dage then prepared the form to initiate Section 106 consultation, describing the potential danger to historic wallpaper in the home as well as the need to abate the existing lead paint. The solution proposed was to have a historic wallpaper specialist remove intact samples of wallpaper from each room to be preserved in the museum collections. Once those samples were preserved, the remaining wallpaper would be removed and the existing plaster walls painted. Painted plasterboard on the walls leading to the basement, meanwhile, would be covered in modern sheetrock, thus encapsulating the lead paint while protecting the original fabric. Several exterior windows and one interior door would be removed, stripped of lead paint, painted to match the original, and reinstalled.

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Consultation of effects to the cultural resources under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act continued through the summer of 2002, and, in the summer of 2003, funds became available through an FY03 Housing Initiative Funds Allocation, which allowed the park to obligate the funds for lead-based paint abatement.²⁹¹ Also in the summer of 2003, however, park and MWRO staff identified additional issues with the building. An assessment of the Frank Wallace Home conducted through the Facility Management Software System (FMSS) process in July 2003 identified the need for work on the foundation and basement floor. Superintendent Sanders submitted requests for funding for FY04 that included foundation and basement repairs and repairs to the soffits. Planning for this structural work continued simultaneously with the lead paint abatement project, the funds for which were obligated in September 2003. The work began shortly thereafter, along with other planned projects including installation of fire and security alarm systems. In October 2003, Historical Architect O'Bright recommended further investigations of the foundations of both the George Wallace and Frank Wallace Homes. The homes, he observed, "have a number of foundation structural problems that range from severe to alarming." Park staff, including Facility Manager Joe Cannon, had been filling cracks in the foundation, leveling the sidewalks, and providing surface drainage. Cannon had hoped to replace the basement floor in the Frank Wallace Home before a new tenant moved in, "but there are issues beyond busting out and laying new concrete. . . I believe that we are looking at some major work with regard to the Frank [Wallace Home] front porch and foundation walls in both structures."²⁹²

Work continued sporadically through the winter of 2003-2004, though work on lead paint abatement was halted in December when it was too cold for repainting and the contractor did not have the necessary carpenters for the woodworking that was required. Superintendent Sanders spent much of the winter lining up sources of funding for proposed future work, including Housing Initiative funds for soffit repairs and structural investigations since regular park funding through ONPS was not sufficient to cover the

²⁹⁰ Carol Dage, handwritten meeting notes, July 11, 2002; files of Harry S Truman NHS; Model Form for Assessment of Actions Having an Effect on Cultural Resources, Lead Paint Abatement (Interior/Exterior), Frank Wallace home, HS15, July 25, 2002; files of Harry S Truman NHS.

²⁹¹ Email, Bob Kammel to James A. Sanders, June 12, 2003; files of Harry S Truman NHS; Jerry Senter, Era Environmental to Joe Cannon, Harry S Truman NHS,

²⁹² Email, Al O'Bright to James Sanders, October 3, 2003; for funding requests, see email, James Sanders to Bob Kammel, September 18, 2003; files of Harry S Truman NHS, Al O'Bright files.

anticipated costs. Funds for the structural investigation and soffit repair also came from money that remained from the FY03 budget and an additional \$38,000 from the budget for FY04. Work to repair the soffits on the Frank Wallace Home was completed by July 2004, and Superintendent Sanders obligated funds for the structural investigations at the same time.²⁹³

Tom Fitzpatrick, an engineer with Fitzpatrick Structural Engineering, P.C., working with Quinn-Evans Architects, who had already completed several projects at the Truman Home, conducted the structural investigation during the fall and winter of 2004-2005. The March 2005 draft report identified severe structural deficiencies in the foundation of the Frank Wallace Home.²⁹⁴ The same month, Superintendent Sanders arranged for funding for a project that included replacing both the house foundation and the porch foundation with the funds coordinated through MWRO's park housing program, headed by Bob Kammel.²⁹⁵ The work began with archeological and geophysical evaluations, which were completed in April. These investigations included both the Frank Wallace and George Wallace Homes, and the Truman Home.²⁹⁶ Design work for the foundation replacement project was funded in early May 2005, and funds for the foundation repair itself were authorized later that month. The Section 106 review occurred in the summer of 2005 while construction drawings were being prepared.²⁹⁷ Tom Fitzpatrick provided the final cost estimates in June 2005, and work began in the fall of 2005. Work involved jacking the home up from the foundation and resting it on steel beams, then removing the concrete basement floor and the existing foundation walls before establishing new concrete footings and pouring concrete for the floors and the foundation for the front porch and the main house (Figure 30). The home was built with a large masonry chimney on the west wall, which was separated from the house before the building was lifted from the foundation. As Al O'Bright recalled,

The house went up; the fireplace stayed in place, and then the real fun started. I think it was—I can't remember the name of the person who did – the subcontractor who did the shoring. They didn't put enough shoring in. They used really rotten—well, not rotten, but steel beams that had been scavenged from someplace, and they started swagging out, and the house was shifting away from the fireplace. . . . they had to do some quick shoring—emergency shoring—to . . . keep it from moving any more.²⁹⁸

²⁹³ Email, James Sanders to Bob Kammel, February 23, 2004; email, James Sanders to Joanne Six, March 30, 2004; Sanders to Kammel, August 17, 2004; files of Harry S Truman NHS, Al O'Bright files.

²⁹⁴ Email, James Sanders to Rick Maestas, March 23, 2005; email, Sanders to Bob Kammel, March 16, 2005; files of Harry S Truman NHS, Al O'Bright files.

²⁹⁵ Email, James Sanders to Bob Kammel, March 24, 2005; files of Harry S Truman NHS, Al O'Bright files.

²⁹⁶ Trip Report – Geophysical Evaluation of the Truman Home, the George Wallace House, and the Frank Wallace House Properties – Harry S Truman National Historic Site, Independence, Missouri (April 8-14, 2005). On file, Midwest Archeological Center, Lincoln, Nebraska.

²⁹⁷ Trip report, Archeologist, Archeological Assistance and Partnership Program to Manager, MWAC, June 9, 2005; files of Harry S Truman NHS, Al O'Bright files. Additional monitoring took place in December 2005 once the Frank Wallace and Noland Homes were being lifted off of their foundations.

²⁹⁸ Al O'Bright, oral history interview, January 27, 2016.



Figure 30. Frank Wallace Home during basement renovation, 2005. Photo provided by Harry S Truman NHS.

The Frank Wallace Home foundation replacement project was complicated by several factors. First, NPS had not prepared an HSR for either the George Wallace or the Frank Wallace Homes. Therefore, all the structural information the engineers initially had to use were on the HABS drawings from 1992. Although Tom Fitzpatrick prepared a structural investigation in the fall and winter of 2004-2005, it was not a comprehensive study and allowed for only limited construction documents. Second, the park facilities maintenance staff had been severely cut in Superintendent James Sanders' final weeks before transferring to Lincoln Home NHS. As Al O'Bright recalled, Sanders

got rid of almost all the maintenance staff. . . . So, the park had four maintenance staff. . . just trying to keep these buildings up. Jim [Sanders] managed to get rid of three of them. Only Lewis [McKarnin] remained. He was the only one doing. . . the inspection services.²⁹⁹

Third, the work of raising the home and replacing the foundation took place simultaneously with the foundation replacement of the Noland Home, discussed in the following section. Finally, the contractor selected for both the Frank Wallace Home and the Noland Home projects was not the ideal candidate for the job. However, in 2005, construction work in Independence was booming, and finding highly qualified contractors was a problem, particularly on the short notice allowed by the available funding. In part because of the lack of available staff to provide the necessary oversight, the project suffered from cost overruns at a time when the park could least afford it.³⁰⁰

²⁹⁹ Ibid.

³⁰⁰ Ibid.

The project was completed, however, bringing the Frank Wallace Home up to good condition on the List of Classified Structures. Finally, in 2010 the park contracted for a new roof on the home. The existing asphalt shingles were removed, and new asphalt shingles were installed with new sheet metal flashing. The work was completed in the summer of 2010.³⁰¹

Renovation: Noland Home

Although the two Wallace Homes were in reasonably good condition with the exception of the foundations, the Noland Home clearly was in poor condition. All current and former park staff who were present when the home was added to the Harry S Truman NHS had similar responses to its condition. As Superintendent Carol Dage recalled,

the Noland House, I don't know how to tell you, other than just to say—the others weren't in best condition, but the Noland House was scary. . . . there was plaster falling when we went into the. . . .I'll never forget—Michele Cefola was the Facility Manager, and the floor was pitched up in the middle, and it was like the structure was moving! And there were marbles in the room, so we set a marble in the middle of the room, and the marble didn't know where to go because it was just—it was really bad!"³⁰²

The Noland Home's condition required extensive renovation work, but the park had limited funds at the time to commit to the new properties. At the Noland Home, the exterior was the highest priority from the standpoint of both public safety and public relations. The home's exterior paint was flaking off in many places, which was unsightly and potentially hazardous, as the paint contained lead. Addressing this problem, however, was delayed while funding for the work was arranged, and the home remained vacant and unimproved for more than four years except for the installation of a furnace which helped with the humidity in the home. In May 1995, Historical Architects Al O'Bright and Laura Johnson reviewed the condition of the Noland Home, reporting that "exterior finishes are of extreme concern in-so-far as preservation of the structure, neighborhood appearance, and lead paint contamination." Their recommendation was that approximately half the exterior finishes could be scraped to bare wood, and remaining intact paint finishes "could be feathered and washed in preparation for painting." Given the required technical capabilities of capturing and disposing of lead paint flakes, they recommended that the work be performed under contract rather than by park personnel.³⁰³

Superintendent Kenneth Apschnikat was coming under pressure from the public as a result of the Noland Home's condition and requested funding support to begin rehabilitation work. "Fifth District Congresswoman [Karen] McCarthy [D-MO] has now

³⁰¹ Statement of Work: Roof Replacement, Frank Wallace House, April 14, 2010; meeting notes, Frank Wallace Roof Replacement Site Visit July 26 2010, PMIS No. 164219; files of Harry S Truman NHS, Al O'Bright files.

³⁰² Carol Dage, oral history interview, January 7, 2016.

³⁰³ Memorandum, Al O'Bright and Laura Johnson to Acting Associate Regional Director, Planning and Resource Preservation, MWRO, May 12, 1995; files of Harry S Truman NHS, H30.

become involved,” he explained in June 1995, “and her constituents in the Truman Historic District are even more attentive to the National Park Service actions regarding the house. Because of increased public pressure to ‘do something,’ I recently made a public commitment to begin to improve the appearance of this house by summer 1995.” Making use of O’Bright’s recent recommendation, Apschnikat stated his plans not to undertake full lead paint removal, but light scraping, repriming, and repainting over the existing lead paint. At that point, he intended to use a combination of park staff and staff from other NPS areas to conduct the work.³⁰⁴

It took another year to “do something” about the exterior condition of the Noland Home. In March 1996, MWRO issued an RFP for the exterior painting and asbestos abatement. The contract was awarded to Elliott Drywall & Asbestos, Inc., of Kansas City, Missouri, in May 1996 for \$115,140.³⁰⁵ The specifications were prepared in May 1996, and included stripping the exterior lead paint from all wood surfaces and some metal surfaces, filling holes and caulking joints, removing and replacing broken glazing in windows, and painting all exterior surfaces. Elliott Drywall & Asbestos, Inc. began mobilizing on the site in anticipation of the June 5, 1996, pre-construction meeting, and work began later that month. In August, the contractor was issued a change order to replace the existing west attic window in kind and to replicate and replace existing turned wood ornaments and the arched ornamental trim on the east and southeast gables. In all cases, the contractor was to retain all original materials for potential curation. The original ornamental trim was cataloged and placed in the museum collection. The work was completed later in 1996.³⁰⁶

Additional work to protect and weatherproof the Noland Home for future redevelopment took place the following year. In June 1998, MWRO issued an RFP for reroofing the Noland Home and the George Wallace Home. The contract directed the removal of all existing asphalt shingles and roll roofing, repair of roof sheathing, and installation of asphalt shingles and metal flashing. Given the shortage of funding, however, park staff decided to conduct a provisional re-roofing (Figure 31). As Facility Manager Michele Cefola described it “We just did a quick rolled roofing just...to protect it, because there was a lot of water damage inside. . . .We just got some green to match the green shingles, and we just roll-roofed it.”³⁰⁷

The Noland Home remained in this condition, secure from the elements, with new paint, some exterior wood repair, and a provisional rolled roof, for several more years. In the early 2000s, Superintendent Sanders began lining up funds from multiple sources to begin the more involved process of a complete rehabilitation. For such a complicated

³⁰⁴ Memorandum, Superintendent, Harry S Truman to Field Director, MWRO, June 14, 1995; files of Harry S Truman NHS, D24.

³⁰⁵ Solicitation, Offer and Award, solicitation issued March 29, 1996; files of Harry S Truman NHS, Al O’Bright files.

³⁰⁶ Project Manual, Exterior Lead Paint Abatement and Painting, Noland House (HS-22), May 2, 1996; Carol Dage, Information sheet for upcoming Exterior Lead Paint Abatement and Painting Project for the Noland House, June 10, 1996; Billy W. Davis, Contracting Officer, MWRO to Neva Elliott, Elliott Drywall & Asbestos, Inc., August 14, 1996; files of Harry S Truman NHS, Al O’Bright files.

³⁰⁷ Michele Cefola, oral history interview, March 2, 2016.



Figure 31. Chief of Facility Management Michele Cefola on Noland Home roof, 1992. Photo provided by Harry S Truman NHS.

project, MWRO Cultural Resources staff had recommended a complete HSR as early as 1996.³⁰⁸ The problem, as usual, was funding. In a 2003 email, Sanders explained some of the difficulties and the complicated process that he went through to begin the work. During the 1990s, the park was required to divide the work on the Noland Home into separate project funding requests, a policy that had changed by 2003. The construction work, in several phases, had already been funded, including construction documents (\$45,000) and construction (\$355,000), but the first phase, the HSR, budgeted at \$105,000, had not yet been funded, and had to be completed before work could begin on the succeeding phases.

O’Bright, who occasionally was critical of Superintendent Sanders’ management of the site, expressed wonder at his management of funding: “he was kind of a manipulator with regard to funding. . . . Really good at getting funding, but nobody knows how he did it.”³⁰⁹ In his May 2003 email to several staff members at MWRO, Sanders outlined the complicated series of steps he took to cobble together the necessary funds:

[MWRO Chief of Design and Facility Management] Mike Fees has agreed that \$10,000 of PMIS #62845 can be added to PMIS #62949B—Structural Stabilization and Rehabilitation Treatments, Truman Farm Garage, which is

³⁰⁸ Email, Bill Harlow, MWRO to Marty Sutherland, MWRO, April 1, 1996; files of Harry S Truman Home.

³⁰⁹ Al O’Bright, oral history interview, January 27, 2016.

scheduled for funding from Repair/Rehab in FY-2003 for \$27,000, because the more detailed engineering estimate was \$37,000. This will leave \$35,000 available to put in the pot for the Historic Structures Report, which Mike agreed could be done.

The park currently has \$45,000 of 80% Fee Demo funds in a holding account, which could be put into the pot with the \$35,000 of Repair/Rehab, thus totaling \$80,000 for the Historic Structures Report. [MWRO Budget Analyst] Carol Dahl agrees that we could use it for this purpose but that it would need WASO concurrence. However, since it is less than \$100,000, it should receive approval in a short time frame.

In talking to [MWRO Chief of Cultural Resources] Craig Kenkel, he believes that there is a very good chance that parks will not be able to obligate their CRPP funds by the end of the fiscal year, due to the late approval notice this year. This means that there is a good chance that CRPP funds in the remaining amount of \$25,000 would be available to contract for the \$105,000 Historic Structures Report this fiscal year. This is made even more possible by the fact that Regional Cultural Resources has a Continuing Quantities contract with Quin-Evans [sic] who has the capability of completing Historic Structures Reports.

Craig Kenkel and [MWRO Chief, Historic Architecture and Landscapes] Bill Harlow both suggested the possibility of including the specifications (estimated at \$45,000) to rehabilitate the Noland Home into the contract with Quin-Evans [sic], if funds are available. By doing this, all pre-work will have been done in preparation for the actual contract to rehabilitate the Noland Home for \$355,000, which is scheduled in funding in FY-2004.³¹⁰

This complicated bit of financial magic proved successful, as WASO approved use of the park's 80% Fee funds for the HSR. Funding for preparation of the HSR was in place later in the summer of 2003, and the post-award meeting took place on September 29.³¹¹ Rather than the AE firm of Quinn-Evans Architects, however, Bahr Vermeer Haecker Architects, of Lincoln, Nebraska, was selected to prepare the HSR. Detailed investigations of the home, including analyses of materials, construction methods, and a construction chronology, continued through the fall of 2003 and into the winter of 2004. While this was proceeding, Sanders and MWRO budget specialists worked to assure funding for construction. Eventually, this involved re-programming the \$355,000 in construction funding from FY04 to FY05.³¹² The draft HSR, meanwhile, was reviewed by park staff in late February 2004, and a Values Analysis meeting was held on-site in late March 2004. After an extensive review of multiple drafts, including discussions of programmatic questions such as exhibit space and restroom locations, Bahr Vermeer

³¹⁰ Email, James Sanders to Mike Fees, Carol Dahl, Craig Kenkel, Bill Harlow, May 16, 2003; files of Harry S Truman NHS.

³¹¹ Email, Al O'Bright to Carol Dage, James Sanders, Joe Cannon, September 19, 2003; files of Harry S Truman NHS.

³¹² Email, James Sanders to Ernie Quintana MWRO, January 26, 2004; files of Harry S Truman NHS.

Haecker finalized the HSR in the fall of 2004. In November 2004, the firm coordinated a project start-up meeting to begin planning and design for the Noland Home rehabilitation, with NPS indicating that the highest priority was to replace the foundation. The list of other concerns was extensive, though, including perimeter drainage, utilities, mechanical, electrical, plumbing, and sewer connections together with architectural issues such as exterior stairs, and exterior finishes.³¹³

Design development continued through the fall of 2004 and into the winter of 2005, with a 65% plan submitted for review in early January 2005. While design plans were being developed, park staff, with assistance from Al O’Bright, prepared Section 106 XXX documentation. In the description of the project for Section 106 review, foundation replacement was again stressed as the first priority. It would require some excavation, along with excavation for a new basement entrance from the rear of the home. The proposed excavation work triggered the requirement for archeological investigations. Plans also included a possible geo-thermal heating system which would require wells and pumps in the back yard, and an exterior restroom facility, all of which would require excavation in the back yard.³¹⁴ The Midwest Archeological Center conducted the archeological and geophysical investigation of the Noland Home property in March 2005, including shovel tests and additional one-by-one-meter test units in the basement and backyard. The Midwest Archeological Center stated that the proposed actions would have no adverse effects on the historic property, but recommended that additional archeological monitoring should take place during the construction work. The following month, the Missouri SHPO concurred with MWAC.³¹⁵

Bahr Vermeer Haecker completed construction drawings for the Noland Home rehabilitation project in June 2005, with an estimated budget of \$305,000 for the foundation repair work alone.³¹⁶ This project work was conducted simultaneously with the Frank Wallace Home foundation replacement, described earlier, and faced even greater challenges. The work of the only contractor available for the foundation work was of poor quality, adding to the difficulties created by the reduction of maintenance staff when Superintendent Sanders transferred to the Lincoln Home NHS. Only Lewis McKarnin was available for construction inspection work, but he also had all the other maintenance responsibilities for the park, so keeping an eye on the concrete work was a challenge. His job, he recalled, was that he “Made them do it right! I wasn’t the most popular guy in town, but I didn’t care! . . . The guy that was doing the concrete work, he

³¹³ Project Start-up Meeting Minutes, October 28, 2004; files of Harry S Truman NHS, Al O’Bright files.

³¹⁴ Assessment of Actions Having an Effect on Cultural Resources: Harry S Truman National Historic Site, Conduct Archeological Investigations, Noland, February 25, 2005, submitted by Carol Dage with handwritten comments by Al O’Bright; files of Harry S Truman NHS.

³¹⁵ Trip Report, Archeologist, Archeological Assistance and Partnership to Manager, Midwest Archeological Center, National Park Service, March 24, 2005; files of Harry S Truman NHS, H2621. Mark A. Miles, Missouri SHPO to James Sanders, April 20, 2005; files of Harry S Truman NHS. The final report was produced in 2009: Steven L. Devore and William E. Altizer, *Geophysical and Archeological Investigations at Harry S. Truman National Historic Site, Independence, Missouri* (Midwest Archeological Center, Technical Report No. 117).

³¹⁶ Transmittal document, Rehabilitate Noland House (HS-22) Foundation, Title II, L05030, Bahr Vermeer Haecker to Theora McVay, Al O’Bright, Bill Harlow, and Jim Sanders, June 17, 2005; files of Harry S Truman NHS.

wasn't very good. Like, the sidewalk that you seen out front, he had to take it up and re-pour it three times. . . .He did the foundation, too. And he couldn't—he really wasn't very good at that, either.” O'Bright recalled that “there were virtual fist-fights between Lewis and Charlie Domingas [the concrete subcontractor] over quality of the work. And it was just a mess. It was probably one of the worst projects that I ever had to do with a contractor.” As an example, O'Bright recalled that:

In one case, in the Noland house, the driver, the Reddi-Mix driver, decided to stop at home on the way to make the delivery, and eat lunch. And then, he got there, and it was starting to set up in his drum! And they decided to pour anyway. And this is in the east wall of the Noland house. And they were really hurting to get it down, anyway, into the formwork. And they got it down in there, and it froze up, and they pulled the framework, and there was, you know, holes. . . .the contractor was responsible for doing testing, so they had to core bore and had it all break-tested and everything. And, actually, it came out pretty good, although they had a few honeycombs to fill.³¹⁷

Work on rebuilding both the Noland Home and Frank Wallace Home foundations began in the fall of 2005, and was not completed until the following summer, when both homes were lowered back onto their new foundations (Figures 32, 33). With the new foundation, deeper basement, and a new basement entrance from the rear, the Noland Home still remained closed, awaiting funding to renovate the interior, which was in very poor condition. Funds finally became available again in 2009 through FY10 Line-Item Construction funding and, by then, also involved HFC for development of exhibits in the Noland Home.³¹⁸ Also recently added to the proposed work was providing a handicapped-accessible ramp on the south side of the building from the alley between the Noland Home and the Higher Ground Hotel, the former Center Stake building. This proposal required extensive coordination with the City of Independence through 2009, a process that continued into early 2010 as planning for construction began.³¹⁹ Work on the interior, which required the contractors to almost completely rebuild the spaces due to the level of deterioration, took place through late 2010 and into 2011. Installation of a new roof and extensive repair to the siding began in the spring of 2011.³²⁰

The project, completed 2012, was vast in scale. As former Administrative Officer Joanne Six noted, the entire project, including the earlier foundation work, required a

³¹⁷ Al O'Bright, oral history interview, January 27, 2016; Lewis McKarnin, oral history interview, February 4, 2016.

³¹⁸ Project Agreement: Rehabilitate the Interior and Grounds of the Historic Noland Home, Harry S Truman National Site, PMIS 105474A, FY 2010 Line-Item Construction Funding, approved by Harry S Truman NHS, Harpers Ferry Center, and Denver Service Center, November 16, 2009; files of Harry S Truman NHS, D52.

³¹⁹ Larry Villalva, Harry S Truman to Donna K. Coatsworth, City of Independence, February 25, 2009; Coatsworth to Villalva, May 21, 2009; files of Harry S Truman NHS, D52. See also Meeting Minutes, Noland House onsite meeting, March 15, 2010; files of Harry S Truman NHS

³²⁰ Email, Mike Ryan, Chief of Interpretation and Visitor Services, Harry S Truman to Norton Canfield et al., March 17, 2011; files of Harry S Truman NHS, D52.



Figure 32 Noland Home during foundation renovation, 2006. Photo provided by Harry S Truman NHS.



Figure 33. Noland Home during foundation renovation, 2006, as seen from basement. Photo provided by Harry S Truman NHS.

budget of more than \$1.5 million.³²¹ An important component was development of exhibits throughout the first floor of the home, at a budget of nearly \$400,000.³²² The exhibits were the final component of the project and were completed in late 2012.³²³ Exhibits are spread throughout four rooms on the ground floor and use historic photographs, maps, text, and audio recordings to present information about Harry Truman's personal life, his courtship of Bess Wallace, which began from the Noland Home, how he balanced his public and private life, the decisions he made as president, and the influence his hometown of Independence had on him as a young man through his retirement years. The exhibits are designed to supplement information provided in the orientation film in the Visitor Center and to allow visitors waiting for a tour of the Truman Home across the street to learn more about the Trumans while sheltered from the elements.

Studies

Planning for the first set of new components of the Harry S Truman NHS, the Wallace Homes and the Noland Home, was slow in coming. As noted earlier in this chapter, for example, park officials did not prepare an HSR for the two Wallace Homes prior to beginning rehabilitation work on them several years after they became parts of the park. Other planning documents for these buildings were also delayed, including two types that had been fundamental for the Truman Home itself: a Historic Resource Study (HRS) and a Cultural Landscape Report (CLR). Planning for these documents did not begin until later in the 1990s, by which time the Truman Farm in Grandview, Missouri, had already been added to the Harry S Truman NHS (see Chapter 7 for additional information about the Truman Farm as a new component of the park). It made sense, therefore, to include the Truman Farm in both planning documents as a source for new interpretive materials and themes.

Initial discussions of an HRS for the four properties that had been added to the park (George and Frank Wallace Homes, Noland Home, Truman Farm) began in 1999 when Historian Ron Cockrell combined the scopes of work for the original expansion, the Wallace and Noland Homes, and the new expansion, the Truman Farm, into a single contract. Because of funding constraints, the contract was then broken into two components: Phase I in FY99 to provide for a detailed outline and annotated bibliography, and Phase II in FY00 for the complete document.³²⁴ An RFP for the work was issued in July 1999, stating the document's goals as identifying and evaluating the four properties within their appropriate historic and geographic contexts, preparing NRHP nominations, and identifying any associated cultural resources. The firm of Evans-Hatch & Associates, consisting of historians Gail and Michael Evans-Hatch and based in Silverton, Oregon, was selected for the project, and began work with an introductory

³²¹ Joanne Six, oral history interview, March 22, 2016.

³²² Harpers Ferry Center, Workflow management Status Report, Harry S Truman Exhibits, November 5, 2010; files of Harry S Truman NHS.

³²³ Email, Mike Ryan to Carol Dage et al., December 10, 2012; files of Harry S Truman NHS, D52.

³²⁴ Email, Ron Cockrell to Carol Dage, June 11, 1999; files of Harry S Truman NHS.

meeting in late September 1999. Cockrell outlined the likely sources for the work, including collections at the Harry S. Truman Library and extensive materials on the Truman Farm and the three properties in Independence that park staff had accumulated.³²⁵ In addition, the consultants had access to Cockrell's several studies, including the original HSR, HRS, and CLR for the Truman Home, together with the many oral history interviews that had already been conducted by Cockrell, James Williams, and others.

When completed in early 2001, the HRS was a long document consisting of twelve chapters divided into two sections, one focusing on the Truman Farm and one on the three Independence properties. Each section included a lengthy historical narrative of the particular resources with a focus on Harry Truman's relations to them, presenting views of the personal and political development of Truman through the two lenses of his farm experiences and his relations with extended family members in Independence. Following the general narratives, the HRS presented more detailed information about the physical development of the four resources through archival research, oral history interviews, and historic maps, together with information about the already-completed and proposed rehabilitation efforts of the four properties.³²⁶

A CLR revision to incorporate the two Wallace Homes and the Noland Home into the existing Truman Home CLR was planned in late 1997 and early 1998. From the early 1990s, when the three new properties were added to the Harry S Truman NHS, until 1997, landscape management focused on the Truman Home and the two contiguous Wallace Homes. Historian Ron Cockrell had completed the Truman Home CLR in 1989 and included substantial comments about the two Wallace Homes. James Williams, a former park employee, met with a tenant in the Frank Wallace Home, Mrs. Doris Hecker, in 1989, and gained valuable information about the location of landscape materials and historic plantings in the Frank Wallace Home yard. This preliminary information allowed development of a basic site plan, but more detailed information was lacking. Park staff in late 1997 prepared a proposal for separate CLRs for the Independence properties and the Truman Farm, together with alternatives and proposed budgets for each.³²⁷

The project lay dormant until September 2013, however. Unlike when the original Truman Home CLR was completed, NPS had developed formal guidelines and standards for the preparation of CLRs. A project team was selected that included landscape architects and landscape designers from Quinn Evans Architects and Mundus Bishop Design Company, with the support of Michael W. Dogherty, an arborist with Tree Management Company.³²⁸ The extensive final report was completed in 2015, and

³²⁵ Trip Report, Senior Historian, MWRO to Chief, Cultural Resources, MWRO, October 8, 1999.

³²⁶ Gail E. H. Evans-Hatch and Michael Evans-Hatch, *Farm Roots and Family Ties: Historic Resource Study, The Harry S Truman Grandview Farm, The Wallace Houses, and the Noland House in Independence* (approved by MWRO February 13, 2001). See also Ron Cockrell, MWRO to Evans-Hatch & Associates, April 12, 2001; files of MWRO, H22.

³²⁷ Project Statement, Develop Cultural Landscape Reports-Wallace/Noland, February 12, 1998; files of Harry S Truman NHS

³²⁸ Quinn Evans Architects and Mundus Bishop Design, *Harry S Truman National Historic Site, Independence Unit: Cultural Landscape Report* (approved by MWRO January 2015).

fulfilled the objectives of documenting the physical development of the cultural landscapes, documenting existing conditions, evaluating the significance and integrity of the cultural landscapes, providing treatment and management recommendations, and providing interpretive information for park staff to use to enhance tours of the Truman Home. The CLR identified the period of significance for the cultural landscape as 1919 to 1972, “the time frame in which President Truman had a direct association with the four properties.”³²⁹ The CLR draws heavily on research by Cockrell for the HSR and HRS in the 1980s to provide a general historical overview of Independence, Harry Truman, and Bess Wallace and her family before presenting the results of a detailed analysis of existing conditions. This analysis contains evaluations of the significance and integrity of the many landscape features, including spatial organization, circulation patterns, vegetation, the arrangement of buildings and structures, small-scale features, archeological resources, and utilities within the four properties and identified those elements that contribute to the significance of the cultural landscape. The recommendations for treatment and preservation then followed the same pattern. The study was completed in 2014, and the final CLR was issued in early 2015.

Because of delay in implementing the range of needed improvements to the Wallace and Noland Homes after their inclusion in the park, due largely to funding constraints, much of the work took place simultaneously with projects at the Truman Farm Home in Grandview, Missouri. This site, approximately twenty miles south of Independence, was added to the park in late 1993, before much work had begun at the properties in Independence. Together with the George and Frank Wallace Homes and the Noland Home, the Truman Farm Home helps visitors to understand more completely the life of Harry S Truman before and after his presidency. The Truman Farm Home, though, which drew on a far different background than the three homes added to the park in 1990, posed challenges that the Independence properties did not. It is a project that continues to the present. Its story is the subject of the next chapter.

³²⁹ Ibid., 2-4.

Chapter 7: Second Site Expansion: Truman Farm

The first expansion of the Harry S Truman NHS, described in Chapter 6, involved three buildings immediately adjacent to the Trumans' home in Independence: the George Wallace Home and Frank Wallace Home on West Truman Road behind the Truman Home, and the Noland Home on North Delaware Street across from the Truman Home. These three properties were identified very early in the planning for the Harry S Truman NHS, and their acquisition by NPS was included in the park's first General Management Plan in 1987. Protection of these homes was deemed vital to the Truman Home itself since they were owned by members of the extended family who were so important to Harry and Bess Truman, particularly in the post-presidential years from the mid-1950s through Mr. Truman's death in 1972 and Mrs. Truman's death a decade later. Without the surrounding neighborhood in general, and those three homes in particular, remaining intact as Mr. Truman knew it, NPS would have lost significant resources to interpret the Truman story.

The second expansion of the park was completed in late 1993 when President Bill Clinton signed into law P.L. 103-184 that added the Truman Farm at 12301 Blue Ridge Boulevard in Grandview, Missouri, to the Harry S Truman NHS. The addition of the Truman Farm to the park, however, drew from a separate preservation impetus than the need to protect the Truman Home in Independence and was not included in the 1987 GMP. Instead, local citizens in Grandview began the process of seeking ways to protect the farm home which Harry Truman's parents and grandparents owned and where he lived from 1906 until 1917. The Truman Farm came into public hands in early 1981 when the Department of the Interior provided the State of Missouri with a matching grant to purchase a 5.2-acre parcel containing the farm home from the Truman family, and the farm home came under the ownership of Jackson County. By the early 1990s, however, Jackson County, was unable to care for the property properly and coordinated with NPS to support legislation making it part of the Harry S Truman NHS. The Truman Farm property was transferred to the National Park Service by Jackson County, Missouri, at a transfer ceremony in 1994. Subsequent legislation, passed in 2004, authorized NPS to acquire an additional adjacent five acres to provide a buffer for the property from the surrounding area, which was, and still is, characterized by intense commercial development. The two parcels that constitute this buffer and were also part of the original Truman family farm were finally acquired in 2008 and 2011, the latter including a modern building that fronts on Blue Ridge Boulevard adjacent to the driveway leading to the Truman Farm.

As a result of the legislations that added the different parcels of the Truman Farm, the Harry S Truman NHS now consists of two units: the Independence Unit, comprising the Truman Home, the two Wallace Homes, and the Noland Home; and the Grandview Unit, comprising the Truman Farm Home, outbuildings that were associated with the farm, and the modern commercial building. Unfortunately, the Truman Farm became part of the park at a time when the park and MWRO staff were facing difficult budget and

staffing conditions for the Independence Unit, including the extensive renovations being undertaken at all four of the principal buildings in Independence as described in Chapters 5 and 6. As part of the budget constraints, the park periodically experienced severe staff shortages in the late 1990s and through the 2000s. These budget and staff shortages combined with the distance between Independence and Grandview to make NPS development of the Truman Farm a great challenge and delayed its full implementation.

Operation Prior to NPS

The Truman Farm Home in Grandview belonged to Harry S Truman's family from the 1860s until it was conveyed to Jackson County in early 1981, with the exception of a brief period from 1940 to 1945. Although his nephews Gilbert and Harry owned the farm into the 1960s and 1970s, and he continued to influence its operation and land sales after his presidency, Harry S Truman never returned to live at the farm after he returned to Independence from World War I. Instead, he and Bess were married in 1919 and began living immediately in her mother's home on North Delaware Street. The farm remained in the hands of his mother, and then of his brother, Vivian, and sister, Mary Jane. After Vivian's death, the farm passed to Vivian's sons, Harry A. Truman and Gilbert Truman, Harry S Truman's nephews. Together with their uncle, Harry A. and Gilbert sold substantial portions of the original 600-acre farm in the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s, primarily for commercial development which included the Truman Corners Shopping Center built in 1958. In the mid-1970s, following the death of their uncle in 1972, the brothers contacted leading citizens in Grandview about conveying the farm home for public use. In 1977, the Grandview Chamber of Commerce took the lead in trying to find sources of support and public funding to acquire the property.

The Grandview Chamber of Commerce aimed high from the very beginning. In March 1977, Chamber Manager Vince Harrison wrote to President Jimmy Carter seeking his assistance in purchasing the property to create a historical site for Harry S Truman at the farm in Grandview. From its original large acreage, Harrison explained, the farm was reduced to a small plot of land "and the time is fast approaching when bulldozers will no doubt arrive and demolish something which should be kept and maintained for those who may come after us."³³⁰ Although President Carter did not reply directly, Harrison's letter was conveyed to Missouri's Congressional delegation, and, in May 1977, Senator John C. Danforth asked NPS Director Gary Everhardt for assistance in acquiring the farm for memorial purposes. Acting Associate Director Jerry L. Rogers responded quickly to Harrison explaining that Congressional action would be required to acquire the Truman Farm and that NPS would not recommend such action since NPS intended to focus its efforts on President Truman's principal residence in Independence, which Mrs. Truman still owned. The property might, however, be eligible for the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), Rogers suggested, and he advised contacting the Missouri State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) for assistance in that regard. At the same time, Rep. Dick Bolling wrote to the President of the Grandview Chamber of Commerce, Rev.

³³⁰ Vince C. Harrison to The President, March 9, 1977; files of Harry S Truman NHS.

Robert L. Johnson, suggesting that funds for preservation of the Truman Farm could be available through NPS' Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation, which maintained a grants-in-aid program. Bolling then recommended also that the Chamber contact Missouri State Historic Preservation Officer Carolyn Ashford.³³¹

In June 1977, the Grandview Board of Aldermen passed a resolution urging the Missouri SHPO to request placement of the Truman Farm on the NRHP. Carolyn Ashford then replied to Senator Thomas Eagleton (D-MO), who had forwarded to her the Grandview Board of Aldermen's resolution, that her agency supported the nomination and recommended that it be considered for further study. At the same time, she replied to Beverly Bunce, head of the Grandview Chamber of Commerce's Truman Farm Committee, to the same effect and suggested that he ask Benedict Zobrist, Director of the Harry S. Truman Presidential Library in Independence to recommend a historian who could prepare the NRHP nomination. The Chamber acted quickly to have the NRHP nomination prepared by Architectural Historian Sherry Piland, and, in April 1978, the Missouri SHPO approved the nomination and submitted it to the Keeper of the National Register with a recommendation that it be approved with a national level of significance. The Truman Farm was listed on the National Register by its historic name, Solomon Young Farm, in May 1978.³³² This was an important first step in getting national recognition for the Farm Home, but the bigger hurdle still loomed: acquiring funds to purchase the property. The J.C. Nichols Company, the leading real estate firm in the Kansas City area, represented the Truman family who owned what, by then, had been reduced to 12.9 acres surrounding the farm home. The representative for the J.C. Nichols Company pointed out that the Truman family's property was surrounded by land that was zoned for commercial use, and that the property was recently valued at \$900,000. "Commercially zoned land in the immediate area," he continued, "is rapidly disappearing, and it is important that we move promptly if we are to preserve this historic site. Various commercial developers are showing an interest in this land at this price and the owners will eventually want to sell the land on the open market, if we are unsuccessful in obtaining federal funds for the purchase."³³³

The Grandview Chamber of Commerce began more active lobbying of their Congressional delegation, requesting support for federal funds to purchase the Truman's farm property. In November 1978, they achieved an important step when Missouri Governor Joseph Teasdale supported their plan to acquire the Truman Farm. The Missouri Department of Natural Resources (MDNR), which includes the SHPO, also supported the proposal, suggesting that the local committee develop a plan for fund-raising, schedules for renovation and opening, the ultimate usage of the property, and a plan for long-term maintenance. With such a plan in place, Teasdale suggested, MDNR could discuss possibilities for federal grant assistance.³³⁴ The Truman Farm Committee of

³³¹ John C. Danforth to Robert L. Johnson, May 11, 1977; Dick Bolling to Johnson, May 13, 1977; Jerry Rogers, NPS to Vince C. Harrison, May 16, 1977; files of Harry S Truman NHS.

³³² Carolyn Ashford to Thomas F. Eagleton, July 18, 1977; Ashford to Beverly H. Bunce, July 19, 1977; Robert S. Townshend, Acting SHPO to Vince C. Harrison, April 26, 1978; files of Harry S Truman NHS.

³³³ C. J. McGill, J.C. Nichols Company to Vince C. Harrison, July 27, 1978; files of Harry S Truman NHS.

³³⁴ Joseph P. Teasdale to Beverly H. Bunce, November 15, 1978; files of Harry S Truman NHS.

the Grandview Chamber of Commerce also met with Benedict Zobrist at the Truman Library in Independence and found him an eager supporter of their cause.³³⁵ They continued their efforts to seek federal funds to purchase the Truman's property through 1979 and, in January 1980, formed the Harry S. Truman Farm Home Foundation, a non-profit organization. The Trumans, meanwhile continued to sell portions of their land to generate income, while retaining the original home lot in hopes that it would eventually be purchased by the federal government. By August 1980, they retained only 5.255 acres, and Harry A. and Gilbert Truman and their wives signed a statement of intent to donate the half-acre parcel immediate surrounding the farm home to the Truman Farm Home Foundation, while selling the remaining 4.755 acres to the Foundation for \$375,000, less than half of its appraised value. As part of this offer, Jackson County had offered to sponsor a grant through the Department of the Interior's Land and Water Conservation Fund to purchase the 5.3 acre-parcel. The Harry S. Truman Farm Home Foundation, according to the Jackson County plan, would then enter into a management contract with the county under which the Foundation would be responsible for the on-going maintenance, operation, and funding of the property. In October 1980, Secretary of the Interior Cecil D. Andrus presented a check to Governor Teasdale for \$378,250 as a matching grant to purchase the property, which MDNR had requested on behalf of Jackson County. It was a matching grant because the Truman family sold the property for one-half of its appraised value; their contribution served as the state's match. The closing of the sale took place in February 1981.³³⁶

The Foundation began its planning work in 1981 and 1982 and, by early 1983, was working with an architectural firm to begin planning for the restoration of the Farm Home and its eventual use (Figure 34). The objective was to have the Farm Home open on May 8, 1984, Harry S Truman's 100th birthday, the same week the Truman Home in Independence was scheduled to open to the public. The general plan for the Truman Farm proposed by Architects and Planners Collaborative in Kansas City included stabilizing and restoring the Farm Home first, then the other outbuildings, and finally restoring the grounds. Simultaneously, the firm was assisting the Foundation with ideas for interpreting the Farm Home, and proposed to draw upon information gained from the initial restoration work to assist in the interpretation.³³⁷ Later in the spring and summer of 1983, the Foundation engaged an archeologist, Dr. Robert T. Bray from the University of Missouri, to prepare a preliminary study of the grounds. Bray's study was limited due, no doubt, to the funds available. It consisted of background research in readily available sources, a surface inspection, mapping, remote sensing, and targeted shovel tests to confirm findings from the research and remote sensing. Bray identified subsurface structural remains likely from the earlier Solomon Young farm house and barn which burned in the late nineteenth century. He recommended additional survey and testing that

³³⁵ Benedict K. Zobrist to Robert L. Johnson, December 13, 1978; files of Harry S Truman NHS.

³³⁶ Statement from Harry A. Truman, Dorothy Truman, Gilbert V. Truman, and Pauline Truman to Sterling Goddard, Harry S. Truman Farm Home Foundation, August 5, 1980; Goddard to Albert Riederer, Jackson County Legislature, August 18, 1980; files of Harry S Truman NHS. See also News Release, Missouri Department of Natural Resources, October 28, 1980; files of MWRO.

³³⁷ John A. Huffman, Architects and Planners Collaborative, to Sterling Goddard, March 22, 1983; files of Harry S Truman NHS.



Figure 34. Truman Farm Home during renovation, 1984. Photo by Jill York O'Bright, provided by Harry S Truman NHS.

could generate both archeological materials and information to be used in a future interpretive program at the Farm Home.³³⁸

These studies and the work that they proposed were expensive, and funding was a challenge for the Foundation from the beginning. A public meeting was held on May 8, 1983, to kick off a fund-raising campaign designed to allow the Foundation to open the Farm Home a year later, as planned. In February 1984, Jackson County reached an agreement with the Foundation to provide \$75,000 toward the Farm Home's restoration and rehabilitation. The specific items for which the money could be used provides an indication of the scope of work that remained undone, including restoration of the kitchen, rehabilitation of the HVAC system, a new roof and gutters, and construction drawings for upgrading mechanical, electrical, heating, and cooling systems, together with general interior restoration.³³⁹ With these funds and with a group of volunteers, work on the Farm Home proceeded toward an opening later in 1984. The Foundation also acquired period furnishings for the Farm Home, primarily through donations. The Foundation remained on shaky financial footing, however, through 1985 and 1986. Jackson County leadership became increasingly concerned about this, and, in March

³³⁸ Robert T. Bray, "Archaeological Survey and Testing at the Truman Farm Home and Grounds, Grandview, Missouri," prepared for Truman Farm Home Foundation, August 1983; files of Harry S Truman NHS.

³³⁹ Agreement between Jackson County, Missouri and Harry S. Truman Farm Home Foundation, February 21, 1984; files of Harry S Truman NHS.

1986, a report observed that the Foundation had over \$17,000 in debt, was having difficulty finding volunteers to conduct tours, and was two months past due on an insurance payment. In October 1986, facing these insurmountable obstacles, the Foundation voted to turn the Farm Home over to Jackson County. The county accepted ownership and management of the Truman Farm Home in April 1987³⁴⁰

The Jackson County Parks and Recreation Department proved little better at providing the funds necessary to maintain and operate the Truman Farm Home after it acquired the site in the summer of 1987. The Farm Home was open for tours three days a week from April through October 1987, and the Jackson County Parks and Recreation Department assigned one staff member to serve as Site Administrator, supported by one seasonal employee and several volunteers. Staff from Harry S Truman NHS assisted the county with interpretation training, marketing, and directing visitors to the Farm Home. After 1987, however, the county indicated that it was not inclined to provide active financial support for the Farm Home. Despite a small group of dedicated volunteers, the Farm Home foundered on the shoals of budget shortfalls through 1988 and 1989.

Early NPS Involvement

When Jackson County found it was unable to provide the necessary funds in the late 1980s, it first approached the State of Missouri about acquiring the site as it had with President Truman's birthplace in Lamar; the State declined. The county then approached Missouri's Congressional delegation in hopes of having NPS take over management and operation of the Farm Home. The county soon found support also from the City of Grandview, which had been offered the Farm Home by the Truman family in the 1970s but declined to take on the burden. The Farm Home remained a matter of concern for the city, however, since it was a potential draw for tourists, whom they were just beginning to seek. To that end, the city agreed to provide \$5000 in operating funds when Jackson County took over the site in 1987. As the county struggled to maintain and operate the Farm Home, however, the Mayor of Grandview wrote to MWRO in November 1989 to request the assistance of NPS in managing the Farm Home. In his reply, Regional Director Don H. Castleberry acknowledged that NPS was looking into the possibility of becoming involved with the site and advised that he would convene a study team early in 1990 to analyze the various options available.³⁴¹ This study team, Castleberry said, would be headed by Regional Historian Jill York O'Bright. In late 1983, Jill York had begun research to prepare a new NRHP nomination for the Truman Farm with the intent of

³⁴⁰ Memorandum, Leon Younger, Jackson County Parks and Recreation, to Bill Waris and Dennis Taylor, March 28, 1986; Memorandum, Susan Burton, Jackson County Parks and Recreation, to Leon Yonger and Dennis Flanery; Constance O. Soper, Jackson County to Dennis Flannery, July 9, 1987. The concerns over availability of funds was echoed in the minutes of the Foundation, particularly the Minutes from September 17, 1986; no discussions were recorded in the minutes available for this study, however, about a direct takeover by the County. See Minutes of Harry S. Truman Farm Foundation Board of Directors, files of Harry S Truman NHS.

³⁴¹ Don H. Castleberry, MWRO to Harry W. Wilson, December 4, 1989; files of Harry S Truman NHS, L58.

seeking its designation as a National Historic Landmark (NHL). She conducted research in the Truman Library and visited the Farm Home with Superintendent Norm Reigle where they met with Sterling Goddard, head of the Truman Farm Home Foundation, and with John Huffman, the primary architect with Architects and Planners Collaborative, who was then leading the Jackson County restoration effort. In her NHL nomination, York focused on Harry S Truman's years on the farm in Grandview and its impact on his character and political life. She completed the NHL nomination in the spring of 1984, when it was sent to NPS' Washington Office for final evaluation. The Truman Farm Home was designated an NHL in late March 1985.³⁴²

In the fall of 1989, Regional Historian Jill York O'Bright convened the study team to prepare a range of management alternatives for the Truman Farm Home.³⁴³ The Study Team consisted principally of staff from Harry S Truman NHS: Superintendent Norm Reigle, Chief Ranger Palma Wilson, Chief of Cultural Resources Management Carol Dage, Facility Management Specialist Mike Healy, Administrative Technician Joan Sanders, and Museum Aide Constance Odom-Soper, together with consultants from Jackson County Parks and Recreation, the Truman Farm Home Foundation, the Harry S. Truman Library and Museum, and MWRO. In May 1990, MWRO released the management study report, which included a striking assessment of the cause of the problems associated with the Truman Farm Home:

Interviews with representatives of the Farm Home Foundation, a Jackson County legislator, and representatives from the Jackson County Parks and Recreation Department revealed that, when the restoration project was initiated, none of these parties expected to assume responsibility for operating the property following the restoration. Jackson County assumed its role would end once the Land and Water Conservation Fund grant application it filed with the State was approved. The Farm Home Foundation saw its role as planning for and executing the restoration and refurbishing of the home. Neither party intended to accept responsibility for day-to-day management and interpretation of the resource, once restored.³⁴⁴

The MWRO study report defined goals for the site as preserving, restoring, and furnishing the Farm Home and grounds, making the Farm Home accessible to the public, and providing interpretation of the site. Six management alternatives were presented and discussed, including the "no-action" alternative of leaving it as it was with the Jackson County Department of Parks and Recreation. The others all involved transferring responsibility for the site to other entities, including NPS, the State of Missouri, and the Jackson County Historical Society, with variations on arrangements of joint management.

³⁴² Memorandum, Regional Historian, MWRO to Associate Regional Director, Planning and Resource Preservation, MWRO, December 27, 1983; files of MWRO, H22. See also Memorandum, Acting Regional Director, MWRO to Associate Director, Cultural Resources Management, WASO, May 29, 1984; Edwin C. Bearss, Chief Historian, WASO to Fred A. Lafser, MDNR, March 26, 1985; files of Harry S Truman NHS, H34.

³⁴³ Jill York married Historical Architect Al O'Bright in 1985.

³⁴⁴ Alternatives for the Management of the Truman Family Farm, Grandview, Missouri, draft report, MWRO, May 1990, 11; files of Harry S Truman NHS. See also Ronald J. Mack to John C. Danforth, October 18, 1990.

Of the six, the Study Team found that all except the no-action alternative would achieve the goals.³⁴⁵

As discussed in Chapter 2, NPS opposed adding the Truman Farm Home to the Harry S Truman NHS during the legislative process from 1990 to 1993. The staff at Harry S Truman NHS were concerned in part about the expenses associated with realizing the goals identified in the 1990 Management Alternatives study at a time when the three new properties adjacent to the Truman Home in Independence were awaiting funding for rehabilitation.³⁴⁶ Others within NPS were concerned about the condition and historical integrity of the Farm Home. Congress approved acquisition of the Farm Home over these objections, however, and President Bill Clinton signed the legislation that added it to the Harry S Truman NHS on December 14, 1993. Two days later, Superintendent Ronald Mack requested support from MWRO Cultural Resources Division for an assessment of the Farm Home's structural needs. He requested, in particular, that Al O'Bright, and either Charles Masten or Craig Kenkel meet with park personnel at the site.³⁴⁷ Although title to the Farm Home was transferred to NPS as a result of a resolution by the Jackson County Legislature on March 21, 1994, the continuing need for these structural inspections and repairs made it impossible to have the Farm Home open to the public for the formal transfer ceremony from Jackson County to NPS on May 8, 1994.³⁴⁸

Historical Architect Al O'Bright and Restoration Specialist Charles Masten visited the Truman Farm Home in late March 1994 and reported that, while the main home was in generally good condition, the first floor framing was not adequate to support the anticipated visitor load and would have to be reinforced. In addition, the home was not compliant with access under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and the existing fire and intrusion detection systems, installed by the Foundation, would have to be replaced. Of the outbuildings, only the smokehouse, along with the privy, a non-historic structure, was in good condition; the garage and chicken coop, which are original structures, were in poor condition and needed immediate attention.³⁴⁹ The assessment provided by O'Bright and Masten also expressed an on-going concern about the Truman Farm Home, specifically, its distance from Independence and the attendant challenges in providing adequate maintenance and protection for the site. O'Bright and Masten also examined the grounds for a possible location for a maintenance shop, as the park's only maintenance facility at the time was one of the bays of the carriage house behind the Truman Home in Independence.

³⁴⁵ Ibid., 17-21.

³⁴⁶ See Memorandum, Superintendent, Harry S Truman to Regional Director, MWRO, April 24, 1992, estimating an initial investment of \$100,000 just for preservation and structural condition assessment; files of Harry S Truman NHS, W58.

³⁴⁷ Memorandum, Superintendent, Harry S Truman to Regional Director, MWRO, December 16, 1993; files of Harry S Truman NHS, D22.

³⁴⁸ Ronald J. Mack to Betty J. Dawson, Friends of the Truman Farm Home, March 15, 1994; files of Harry S Truman NHS, A82.

³⁴⁹ Memorandum, Al O'Bright and Charles Masten to Associate Regional Director, Planning and Resource Preservation, MWRO, April 7, 1994; files of Harry S Truman NHS, H30.

Formal planning for the Farm Home began in late August 1994 with a meeting at MWRO headquarters in Omaha. The FY95 budget had not yet been set, but \$250,000 had been provisionally set aside for planning and initial operations of the Farm Home. The first priorities, all agreed, were a Historic Structures Report and a Cultural Landscape Report, together with a revised Statement for Management to include the new site. The target date for opening the site to the public was May 1995, a year after acquisition, but that was tentative.³⁵⁰ Interpretive planning also began in the late summer of 1994, identifying the key themes and topics to be addressed at the Farm Home, including Truman's life on the farm, the business of working the family farm, and the relationship between his farming experience and his maturing professional and political views. In the spring of 1995, meanwhile, park staff prepared an Interim Action Plan for the site with short- and medium-term goals. Identified goals were preparing the site for visitors, recruiting volunteers, implementing short-term structural repairs to protect the Farm Home and the outbuildings, evaluating the furnishings, beginning oral history interviews, and improving the security system. Long-term goals included additional historical research and preparation of planning studies: an HSR, an HRS, a CLR, and an archeological survey.³⁵¹

Superintendent Kenneth Apschnikat entered on duty at Harry S Truman NHS in March 1995, arriving from Manassas National Battlefield Park in Virginia. Among his principal reasons for wanting the Superintendent position at Harry S Truman NHS, he recalled "was because they had just acquired the Farm Home." He had experience with land acquisition at Manassas National Battlefield and, earlier, at the Hopewell Culture National Historical Park in Ohio: "I had already had two parks under my belt with experience with managing new additions or acquiring new things. So, I kind of like that kind of thing. It's really challenging." Part of the challenge, he explained, was that NPS had recently taken over management of the property from the local community: "My expectations were. . .to just get it open to the public, because it was—well, you just didn't need to let it sit there, but also, there was—the local community wanted to see something done. So, you kind of wanted to help with that. So, my focus was to get that open, get it signed, and then we'll deal with the studies and the details later."³⁵²

As Apschnikat recalled, an important component of getting the Farm Home open for visitors was the installation of signs on the nearby highways, Blue Ridge Boulevard and U.S. Highway 71. The City of Grandview's Director of Public Works Larry Creek provided initial assistance, and Superintendent Kenneth Apschnikat and Facility Manager Michele Cefola worked extensively with staff from the Missouri Department of Transportation (MoDOT) through late 1995 and into 1996 to achieve installation of signage. Although MoDOT approved the request for new highway signs in late January 1996, the use of the NPS arrowhead was initially not allowed because, MoDOT argued, it was against state policy. In response, Apschnikat pointed out the range of other states which allowed the use of the arrowhead on highway signs, and MoDOT relented. The

³⁵⁰ Memorandum, meeting summary, Superintendent, Harry S Truman to Division Chiefs, Harry S Truman, September 12, 1994; files of Harry S Truman NHS, D18.

³⁵¹ Draft Interim Action Plan, Truman Farm Home, Spring 1995; files of Harry S Truman NHS.

³⁵² Kenneth Apschnikat, oral history interview, February 29, 2016.

signs with the arrowhead were installed by May 1996, in time for the seasonal opening.³⁵³ Thanking the Mayor of Grandview for the assistance of city staff in designing, producing, and erecting the signs, Apschnikat expressed that “Our partnership with the City of Grandview is important to us particularly as we work together on other mutually beneficial projects which promote and improve a special part of your city, the Truman Farm Home.”³⁵⁴ This close working relationship would continue to be important.

Park staff spent the early part of 1995 preparing to open the Farm Home in May 1995. During that time, the park installed a sign at the entrance to the Farm Home, installed a new security system within the home, constructed a boundary fence, and began to assess the furnishings. In addition, in a major effort, a former post office building, which Harry S Truman had moved to the farm to serve as a garage for his new automobile while he lived there, was initially stabilized using cables to hold the walls together. When the Farm Home opened for tours on May 20-21, 1995, tours of the interior were allowed but limited to six people per tour because the structural support work which O’Bright recommended had not yet begun. Visitors who came to the Farm Home during its open days on summer weekends the rest of that year, however, were not allowed in the Home but, instead, were given a tour of the grounds and shown photographs of the interior.

Maintenance was an early and on-going concern. The distance from Independence, the lack of maintenance storage and work space at the Truman Home and the Truman Farm, and the frequent budget shortages created difficulties in maintaining the buildings and grounds in both locations. Simply keeping the grass mowed was a struggle. Starting with just a twenty-one-inch walk-behind mower for the 5.2 acres of the Truman Farm, the park entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the City of Grandview for the loan of a mower before eventually moving up to larger mowers, eventually finding budgets for a trailer and vehicle to transport the yard maintenance equipment the twenty miles from Independence to Grandview.³⁵⁵

Superintendent Apschnikat’s efforts focused on getting the Farm Home, or at least the grounds, presentable and open to the public by May 1995 planning for completion of the formal studies later. Two sets of preliminary planning work began in 1995 and 1996, however: a study of the furnishings, and basic historic research, including oral histories. Historian Jon Taylor entered on duty in March 1995, and the Truman Farm became an early priority. As discussed in Chapter 3, Historian Ron Cockrell began an oral history program for the Harry S Truman NHS in 1983-1984, which James Williams continued as a Seasonal Historian later in the 1980s and early 1990s. Williams interviewed several people who recalled the Trumans at the Farm Home, and Taylor instigated a renewal of

³⁵³ Kenneth Apschnikat to Lawrence N. Creek, City of Grandview, October 30, 1995; Apschnikat to Dan Miller, MoDOT, October 30, 1995; Apschnikat to Miller, February 14, 1996; Apschnikat to Miller, March 19, 1996; files of Harry S Truman NHS, D66.

³⁵⁴ Apschnikat to Harry O. Wilson, City of Grandview, May 1, 1996; files of Harry S Truman NHS, D66.

³⁵⁵ Michele Cefola, oral history interview, March 2, 2016.

the program in the late 1990s by interviewing others, including members of the Foundation, who could share information about the early restoration work.³⁵⁶

Taylor's research efforts also supported the early work of identifying collection items specifically associated with Truman family members. The Truman Farm Home Foundation had been successful in securing period furnishings for the Farm Home, including several items provided by Martha Ann Swoyer, a niece of Harry S Truman, together with a range of other items intended to make the Farm Home look as it might have looked when occupied by the Trumans. Many of these items were accompanied in the Farm Home by plaques identifying the donors. This made for a delicate situation when NPS acquired the property and began planning for the Farm Home's preservation and interpretation. Curator Carol Dage took responsibility for cataloging and assessing the existing furnishings and then determining how the Farm Home would be furnished by NPS. The goal was to maintain an appearance of the simple, common lifestyle of the Trumans when Harry lived there before volunteering for the Army. During the process of cataloging and evaluating the furnishings, park staff under Dage's direction removed many existing items from the Farm Home, focusing particularly on items that were either not representative of the Trumans' lifestyle, were non-historic, or were inappropriate in a tour setting. This included removing the donor plaques, which caused some controversy. As Curator Dage recalled of the Farm Home when NPS acquired it, "the basics were there. Needed some work. A lot of plaques in the house, which, you know, Park Service, we don't do plaques." In addition, the furniture arrangements were often inappropriate: "in the living room, there were ten chairs, and they were all bundled in this corner, not like a living space at all. So, we had to move some of the chairs out and try to present what we felt was more of the way that they would have used the house. And there were several people that were really angered by that, so it was kind of a tough transition for the Farm Home."³⁵⁷ Dage also worked to develop housekeeping schedules and methods for staff that traveled to the Farm Home from Independence.

Recognizing the potential for conflicts, park staff and the Friends of the Truman Home Foundation, which had effectively replaced the earlier Truman Farm Home Foundation, began negotiations for a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) in the summer of 1996 to define each other's roles and responsibilities. Park staff needed the support of the Grandview community, and the MOA identified areas where collaboration would be most fruitful, including developing membership, educational programs, exhibits, and research projects, conducting fund-raising, and supporting grant applications. Drafted in August 1996, the MOA was for a five-year term.³⁵⁸

³⁵⁶ See Jon E. Taylor to Harry A. Truman, March 13, 1996; files of Harry S Truman NHS, H22.

³⁵⁷ Carol Dage, oral history interview, January 7, 2016.

³⁵⁸ MOA between National Park Service and Friends of the Truman Farm Home, Second Draft, August 13, 1996; files of Harry S Truman NHS, H20. The Truman Farm Home Foundation was formally dissolved in July 1997; "To Dissolve Farm Home Foundation," *Jackson County Advocate*, July 24, 1997; clipping in files of Harry S Truman NHS. The remaining \$1,121.85 in the Foundation's treasury was then donated to the Harry S Truman NHS; Kenneth Apschnikat to Dennis H. Flanery, September 15, 1977, files of Harry S Truman NHS, F54.

Early Planning and Land Acquisition

By early 1997, park staff had made several important advances at the Truman Farm Home. As noted earlier, the former post office building had been partially stabilized, and the first-floor interior of the Farm Home had been reinforced, and the exterior had been tested for lead paint. In addition, curatorial staff had installed protective film on all windows to reduce interior exposure to ultraviolet light, and a temporary wheelchair access ramp had been installed. Over 7,000 people had been to the grounds during FY96, over 1,000 of which took tours of the Farm Home in the summer of 1996. Finally, park staff had secured funds to begin revision of the park's GMP, first prepared in 1987, to include both the first wave of expansion in Independence with the Wallace Homes and the Noland Home, and the second expansion of the Truman Farm Home. In addition, in the spring of 1996, the Harpers Ferry Center had developed a series of wayside exhibits for display on the Farm Home grounds.³⁵⁹ This list of accomplishments was accompanied by a list of needs, which focused primarily on planning documents: GMP, HSR, structural investigation, oral history research, archeological survey, and CLR.³⁶⁰ The most immediate need regarding the protection of the building in 1997 was painting the exterior, which was flaking badly. MWRO issued an RFP for exterior painting, including the removal of lead-based paint, in September 1997, with work beginning the next month.

Work on the revised GMP began in the late spring of 1997, and draft alternatives were available for review in early January 1998.³⁶¹ Revisions to the GMP were far less contentious than the preparation of the original had been in the 1980s, as described in Chapter 3, when NPS staff proposed substantial increases in the size and scope of the Harry S Truman NHS. The revised GMP focused, instead, on improved visitor services with a continuing effort at preserving the integrity of the Harry S Truman Home and the buildings surrounding it. As Superintendent Apschnikat recalled, the issue of the Truman Farm and how to protect it was what pushed the GMP revision funding forward, and “it was like that was the main focus.” At the public meetings in Grandview, he added, “all the people would come in, and citizens, and everybody was very supportive of it. Nobody was giving us a hard time. That was a . . . piece of cake compared to some of them I’ve dealt with.”³⁶²

With regard to the Truman Farm Home, the key element of the GMP was the need for a visitor services space, and the intent to acquire the parcel that fronts Blue Ridge Boulevard immediately south of the Truman Farm Home property for that purpose. As Apschnikat recalled, that issue “was a no-brainer. . . . So, it made it really, really easy just

³⁵⁹ Memorandum, Karen L. Tinnin to Dick Hoffman, May 15, 1996; files of Harry S Truman NHS, D6215.

³⁶⁰ “Accomplishments and Plans, Truman Farm, Spring 1997;” “Truman Farm: List of Needs, Spring 1997;” files of Harry S Truman NHS.

³⁶¹ Press Release, “Open Houses To Be Held At Park,” January 20, 1998; files of Harry S Truman NHS, W38.

³⁶² Kenneth Apschnikat, oral history interview, February 29, 2016.

to acquire it. And, the other little issue was, the legislation allowed for the acquisition. Because some legislations don't. . . you have to go back through the *whole* thing, which takes freaking forever. But this one was easy, because it allowed. . . for that acquisition.”³⁶³ The possibility of acquiring space for a new visitor center was discussed in late 1994 and early 1995, barely a year after the Farm Home became part of the park. In January 1995, for example, Museum Technician Scott Stone submitted a list of recommendations for improvements at the Truman Farm based on his frustrations at the slow pace of development. He identified several deficiencies at the site, notably, the lack of a safe visitor contact point and restroom facilities, insufficient parking, and the threat of commercial encroachment together with a shortage of available staff.³⁶⁴ The first three of these items continued to be concerns for all Harry S Truman NHS staff, and coalesced into plans to acquire new property.

The area surrounding the Truman Farm Home, originally part of the Trumans' 600-acre farm, was, by that time, intensely developed with commercial buildings on both sides of the busy road, with a sprawling Wal-Mart immediately to the east of the rear of the property, a large commercial complex immediately to the north, and a row of commercial buildings across from the Farm Home on the west side of Blue Ridge Boulevard. As described in Chapter 2, the enabling legislation adding the Farm Home to the park included a requirement that NPS provide assistance to the City of Grandview with regard to planning and commercial development, giving park staff a role in development of the surrounding area. The lot immediately south of the Truman Farm Home was a long, narrow lot with a small commercial building, a former restaurant, facing the road, surrounded by a parking lot, with open land behind it. This property quickly became a target for both park staff and City of Grandview officials who were eager to assist the park.

In the spring of 1995, Superintendent Apschnikat approached Billy Tudor, Executive Director of the Grandview Chamber of Commerce, regarding the adjacent lot and building. In turn, Tudor contacted State Senator Harry Wiggins about support from the State of Missouri to purchase the lot and building, formerly the Jubilee Restaurant, which was then for sale for \$400,000.³⁶⁵ Although nothing came of the effort at the time, the concept remained important to NPS and the City of Grandview and was a key part of planning for the revised GMP. In June 1997, for example, Superintendent Apschnikat approached State Senator Wiggins directly, following up on a conversation in which, he said, both had discussed “the potential for state funding to accomplish planning towards the goal of having a tourist information center in the Grandview area. Our conversation was extremely timely,” Apschnikat continued, “as the National Park Service has just begun the process of revising its General Management Plan for the Harry S Truman National Historic Site. . . . We have already determined that one of the primary obstacles we face in managing the Truman Farm is the lack of a facility to provide basic services to visitors as well as to meet park operational needs.” Such a facility, he concluded, while

³⁶³ Ibid.

³⁶⁴ Memorandum, Museum Technician to Superintendent, Harry S Truman, January 23, 1995; files of Harry S Truman NHS.

³⁶⁵ Billy D. Tudor to Senator Harry Wiggins, June 13, 1995; files of Harry S Truman NHS

avoiding specifics, “should not be on the Truman Farm grounds but should be as close to the Truman Farm property as possible to expedite visitor use.”³⁶⁶

The Revised GMP for the Harry S Truman NHS was released in June 1999, following multiple opportunities for public comment in Independence and Grandview. Among the management objectives for the Truman Farm, the GMP directed that

The parcel of land located to the south of the current Grandview Unit boundary will be acquired (pending Congressional action and the availability of funds), in order to provide both a buffer for the unit and a visitor center/support services facility through the rehabilitation of the existing restaurant building. . . . The addition will provide unique possibilities for addressing park needs. As previously mentioned, the parcels were part of the original Truman farmstead. Though disturbed by development, addition of the parcels will increase the total acreage of the historic farm that is protected through public ownership.³⁶⁷

In April 1999, as the GMP was nearing completion, park staff submitted a response to a request from MWRO for Land and Water Conservation Fund grant proposals and developed a proposal for \$762,000 to acquire the restaurant parcel, then consisting of five acres. “If this request is not approved,” the statement concluded, “potential encroachment is inevitable to the south side of the farm property boundary. The Truman Farm would truly be an island in the midst of commercial development.”³⁶⁸

The issue became more pressing in 1999 with the construction of the Truman Farm Villas, an apartment complex for senior adults. This large complex is located immediately south of the lot which the park hoped to acquire, leaving that lot as the only buffer between the Truman Farm and the senior housing complex. By that time, the former Jubilee Restaurant had been purchased for use as a paint store separately from the rear lot, dividing the original five-acre lot into two parcels and leaving the lot behind the building undeveloped.³⁶⁹ Clearly, the sale of these lots for commercial uses was a living concern. The Long-Range Interpretive Plan for the entire park, which was completed in 2000 and is discussed in greater detail in Chapter 10, likewise urged acquisition of the property to allow the building to be converted to a visitor contact center. Moves within MWRO to begin the legislative process of acquiring the new land to add to the Harry S Truman NHS boundary began in the fall of 2000 when Superintendent James Sanders prepared a legislative support package.³⁷⁰

The wheels continued to move slowly, though, and the issue remained only a hope during the transition in presidential administrations from late 2000 through 2001 and 2002. In the summer of 2003, however, Superintendent Sanders approached Tom

³⁶⁶ Kenneth Apschnikat to Harry Wiggins, June 13, 1997; files of Harry S Truman NHS, A38.

³⁶⁷ *Harry S Truman National Historic Site: General Management Plan Revision* (June 1999), 18.

³⁶⁸ NPS Land Acquisition Ranking System, attached to email from Jenny Hayes to Bill Schenck, MWRO and Fred Suarez, MWRO, April 30, 1999; files of Harry S Truman NHS, L32.

³⁶⁹ National Historic Landmark Status Report, June 27, 2000; files of Harry S Truman NHS.

³⁷⁰ Document contained within email from James Sanders to Al Hutchings, MWRO, October 18, 2000; files of Harry S Truman NHS.

Goldman, an official with the Iowa Paint Manufacturing Group which owned the building, about selling the building and lot to NPS. Citing the GMP, which called for acquisition of the paint store's lot and the larger, undeveloped lot behind it, Sanders described the potential use of the company's building as an NPS visitor center for the Truman Farm Home. Congressional action would be required, he continued, first to expand the park unit boundary and then to fund the acquisition, a process that could take three years.³⁷¹ At the same time, Sanders similarly talked to the owner of the undeveloped lot behind the paint store building; both requests were met positively, with the two sets of owners expressing an interest in selling their properties to NPS. With those two expressions of interest in selling, Sanders approached Rep. Karen McCarthy (D-MO) and asked that she sponsor the legislation that the Department of the Interior was sending to the Speaker of the House of Representatives.³⁷² As described in Chapter 2, Rep. McCarthy introduced the bill in the House in June 2004, and, after a largely uncontested discussion in the House and with no debate in the Senate, it was passed in early October 2004 and signed into law by President George W. Bush on October 30, 2004.

Although legislation to expand the boundary of the Truman Farm Home to the south passed through Congress with relative ease, securing funds to acquire the two lots proved more challenging and far more time-consuming. The issue continued to lag through 2005, 2006, and into 2007 as funds for the purchase remained unavailable. While the owner of the paint store property expressed no hurry, the owners of the vacant lot behind the paint store faced a degree of development pressure because their land remained undeveloped. By the fall of 2007, with the NPS unable to allocate funds for the purchase, the owners of the vacant lot decided to offer the land to NPS as a charitable donation. They needed to complete the donation by the end of the year to secure the tax advantages. An appraisal conducted by the owners' representative valued the property at \$425,000.³⁷³ Though working quickly by federal property acquisition standards, the transaction was not completed before the end of 2007, due largely to concerns over access easements which the previous owners had conveyed. Federal concerns over these easements were alleviated early in 2008 and, on April 11, 2008, MWRO real estate specialists closed on the 4.96-acre parcel.³⁷⁴

The paint store lot took even more time due to difficulty securing funds for its acquisition. In October 2010, however, Rep. Emanuel Cleaver (D-MO), who was elected to the seat in Congress formerly held by Rep. McCarthy, announced that he had secured \$1.3 million in funding for the acquisition of the paint store parcel through the Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Appropriations (P.L. 111-88).³⁷⁵ The funds became available to MWRO late in 2010, and, in December 2010, Acting Chief of Land

³⁷¹ James Sanders to Tom Goldman, IPM Group, June 27, 2003; files of Harry S Truman NHS, L14.

³⁷² James Sanders to Karen McCarthy, July 14, 2003; files of Harry S Truman NHS, L14.

³⁷³ Michael Johnson, R.H. Johnson Company to Larry Villalva, October 19, 2007; Johnson to Dan Betts, MWRO, October 22, 2007; files of Harry S Truman NHS.

³⁷⁴ Memorandum, Albert A. Kashinski, Senior Attorney, MWRO to Chief, Land Resources, MWRO, January 24, 2008; Memorandum, Chief of Land Resources, MWRO to Superintendent, Harry S Truman NHS, April 14, 2008; see also Ernest Quintana, MWRO to Robert H. Johnson, June 3, 2008; files of Harry S Truman NHS.

³⁷⁵ Paint Store Property Acquisition Time Line, n.d.; files of Harry S Truman NHS.

Resources Division Dewayne Price made an offer to the owner of the property, then identified as PPG Architectural Finishes, Inc. for the appraised value of \$224,000. After negotiations lasting through the winter and spring of 2011, the owner agreed to the sale at the appraised value on July 18, 2011. The Environmental Site Assessment (ESA) was conducted in September 2011, revealing no environmental issues. The sale closed on November 23, 2011, and Woodcrafter Lewis McKarnin performed the first NPS inspection of the building on January 27, 2012, after the former occupants vacated it.³⁷⁶

The NPS and City of Grandview goal for the former paint store was that it would serve not just as a visitor orientation center for visitors to the Truman Farm Home and office space for NPS staff but also as a regional tourism center for the City of Grandview. In the summer of 2013, the City of Grandview and NPS entered into negotiations for an MOU that requested the city to perform maintenance upgrades including repairing the sidewalk in front of the building, re-sealing the parking lot, and painting the parking lanes.³⁷⁷ As of the writing of this Administrative History, work to convert the former paint store for use as a visitor and tourism center has not yet begun.

Renovations: Farm Home and Outbuildings

Throughout the lengthy period while park staff and MWRO were working to first secure passage of legislation to expand the Truman Farm property and then to acquire the two new parcels, restoration and rehabilitation work at the Farm Home began in earnest. The park's efforts from 1993 until 2000 were aimed primarily at securing and stabilizing the Home, described earlier. Beginning in 2000, however, funds became available to conduct more substantial work to preserve and rehabilitate the Truman Farm Home. The first project was to re-roof the Home. Work for this project included removing the existing wood shingle roof and replacing it with new wood shingles, repairing the existing flat-seam metal portion of the roof, and installing new gutters and downspouts to drain water away from the foundation. The RFP released in the late winter of 2000 included both the Truman Farm Home and the Carriage House behind the Truman Home in Independence. Precision Roofing, an Independence company, won the bid for both projects in early April, and began work in early May 2000.³⁷⁸

³⁷⁶ Dewayne S. Price to Michael W. Calleja, December 2, 2010; Corporate Offer to Purchase Real Property, PPG Architectural Finishes, Inc. to NPS, July 18, 2011; Memorandum, Chief, Land Resources Division, MWRO to Regional Director, MWRO, October 11, 2011; email, Larry Villalva to Alan Hesse, Dan Betts, January 30, 2012; files of Harry S Truman NHS, L1425. Superintendent Villalva described the condition of the building and the parking lot in detail, finding the building in generally good condition and the parking lot in fair condition; Memorandum to Park Files, February 10, 2012; files of Harry S Truman NHS, L2623.

³⁷⁷ Draft Memorandum of Understanding Between the National Park Service, Harry S. Truman National Historic Site and the City of Grandview, Missouri, sent to Superintendent Larry Villalva August 29, 2013; files of Harry S Truman NHS.

³⁷⁸ Project Manual, Reshingle Truman Farm Home (TF01), January 27, 2000; Requisition, Carriage House and Farm Home, Harry S Truman NHS, April 4, 2000; Pre-Construction Meeting Notes, April 11, 2000; files of Harry S Truman NHS.

The garage, which had been the Grandview Post Office building before Harry S Truman, as a young man, moved it to the farm in order to store his new automobile in it, was a matter of concern from the beginning of NPS's ownership of the property. The garage is a frame building with horizontal siding; by the 1980s, the sides of the building were clad in metal sheets with a brick design, and the sills rested on a discontinuous rock foundation. The interior of the building featured walls covered in plaster. Park staff stabilized the interior of the garage with cables shortly after NPS's acquisition of the property, but the building continued to tilt and threatened to come off of its foundation, particularly in the face of heavy winds. Funding approved in late 2000 for FY01 provided for a structural evaluation of the building and recommendations for treatment. Quinn Evans Architects and Structural Engineer Tom Fitzpatrick of Fitzpatrick Structural Engineering, P.C., began work on the project in April 2002, and prepared architectural drawings of the building.³⁷⁹ In their report released in August 2002, they described that the wood frame building "is supported intermittently on loose stones. . . without the benefit of a continuous sill beam capable of spanning between the stone supports. Severe deterioration of the base of the structure and lack of continuous foundation support has caused it to sag, tile, and rack out of square." The consultants then provided a detailed series of steps necessary to stabilize the building while preserving the original fabric. These steps were to remove the earlier diagonal cables initially installed by NPS, stabilize the existing plaster, brace the structure and remove the floor system, replace the original stone pile foundations with helix screw piles, anchor the internal framing and square the building, and then re-install the diagonal cables.³⁸⁰ Once the structural analysis was completed, contractors replaced the foundation piers while park staff, primarily Woodcrafter Lewis McKarnin,

came in, repaired all the rock on the outside after we took all the . . . metal sheeting off. Put on all new metal sheeting because it was so far gone that there was no saving it. But we got sheeting that matched the original in the brick pattern. The roof, all the rafters were all rotted. We had to take and—or, I had to replace almost all of them, put new sheeting on, and then put a new roof on top of that."³⁸¹

McKarnin's assistance was again invaluable at the Truman Farm Home when he replaced the front porch columns on the Home. Performing the work largely by himself, he constructed nine-foot-tall columns to replace the originals that had deteriorated. For columns that tall, he recalled, "I had to make them in three-foot sections and then put them together because I don't have a lathe, and nobody in all of Kansas City, that I could find, had a lathe big enough to turn a nine-foot column. So—but I got them, and I made them out of redwood so that they would actually hold up in the weather and stuff, and they've done pretty good." Other, less extensive repairs also conducted by McKarnin

³⁷⁹ PMIS Project Detail Sheet: Rehabilitate Truman Farm Garage, Structural Analysis—Phase I, updated February 15, 2001; National Historic Landmark Status Report, Harry S Truman Farm, July 12, 2002.

³⁸⁰ Quinn Evans Architects, Fitzpatrick Structural Engineering, PC, *Structural Engineering Analysis, Farm Home Garage (TF-02): Harry S Truman National Site* (August 2002), 6-7, quote on 3; files of Harry S Truman NHS.

³⁸¹ Lewis McKarnin, oral history interview, January 2013, 2016.

included replacing the decking on the two back porches and replacing the facing on the porches.³⁸²

In 2007, Superintendent Sanders secured funding to replace the HVAC system at the Farm Home, including a new geothermal heating system. The gas furnaces in the Farm Home had been installed in 1983, shortly after the Truman Farm Home Foundation acquired the property, and the HVAC had been installed in 1991. Each had reached the end of its life expectancy. A Scope of Work was developed for the design work in May 2007 that included the underground geothermal heat pump system, with a well field to be constructed within the existing parking lot. Bahr Vermeer Haecker prepared the construction drawings in July 2007. Because plans called for installing heat pumps and wells underground, staff from MWAC monitored construction excavations in late January 2008, including conducting a magnetic survey prior to construction and then monitoring excavation of the trench for the geothermal lines and wells. The survey identified mortar features that likely were associated with the original home that burned in 1893; the mortar features were not conclusively identified, though they may have been associated with the original house's foundation.³⁸³ The process of connecting the new geothermal pump lines to the HVAC system in the Farm Home was completed in the winter of 2008.

Planning Documents

The need for planning documents to guide the protection, use, and rehabilitation of the buildings at the Truman Farm site were identified shortly after NPS acquired it in late 1993. While the Farm Home itself was acknowledged to be in generally good condition, early assessments identified some need for repair and restoration, and the outbuildings were in generally fair to poor condition. In accordance with standard NPS practice, however, an HSR should be completed prior to commencing significant restoration work on an historic building that is identified on NPS's List of Classified Structures. At the same time, the land surrounding the Truman Farm was severely compromised by commercial development, and the need to identify, document, and protect what remained of the historic landscape through a CLR was acute.

As discussed earlier in this chapter, Superintendent Ken Apschnikat entered on duty shortly after the Truman Farm was added to the Harry S Truman NHS and shepherded the new site into the fold. His short-term focus in the face of concerns from the City of Grandview over the delays in completing the site, was to get the site open, with tours as soon as possible, while deferring the more extensive planning work. After initial work to catalog and organize the existing furnishings in the Farm Home and to

³⁸² Ibid.

³⁸³ PMIS Project Identification Form, Replace the Outdated Heating and Air Conditioning (HVAC) System at the Truman Farm Home, updated February 23, 2007; Scope of Work Architect/Engineer Contract Design Services, Replace HVAC System, Truman Farm Home, May 11, 2007; Dan M. Worth, AIA, Baer Vermeer Haecker, to Linda Clarke, MWAC, July 17, 2007; Memorandum, Archeologist, Archeological Assistance and Partnership Program to manager, MWAC, January 30, 2008; files of Harry S Truman NHS.

stabilize the Home and garage to the point of safety, the site opened to the public in May 1995. All operations at the Truman Farm Home Unit, including maintenance and interpretation, were handled by staff from the Independence Unit with little in the way of budget increases and no new staff. Over the next several years, Rangers based in Independence conducted tours of the Farm Home primarily on weekends during the summer season from Memorial Day to Labor Day as long as budgets and staff permitted, while City of Grandview police provided basic security coverage.

While a revised GMP for the Harry S Truman NHS was prepared to include the Truman Farm as well as the Wallace Homes and Noland Home in Independence in 1999, additional planning work for the site was delayed in the face of staff and budget shortages. It should be kept in mind that, during the decade of the 2000s, in addition to securing new properties along the southern edge of the Truman Farm boundary, park staff was consumed with the extensive range of construction projects at the Independence Unit. These included foundation replacements for the two Wallace Homes and the Noland Home, the complete renovation of the Noland Home, HVAC and fire suppression systems installation, and plaster repair at the Truman Home itself in addition to maintaining the regular schedule of tours, maintenance, and collections management. At the same time, as described in Chapter 6, MWRO contracted for a new Historic Resource Study, a detailed historical overview that included the three new additions to the Independence Unit as well as the Truman Farm. This extensive study, *Farm Roots and Family Ties*, was completed in 2001 and provided information regarding the historical development of the Truman family's farm, their successive homes on the property, and the farm's growth in the nineteenth century and decline in the twentieth.³⁸⁴

This was the last planning document for the Truman Farm for the next decade, however. In 2011, the park finally secured funds to begin the more detailed planning work of a CLR and an HSR. Rather than contract for separate studies, however, park and MWRO staff opted to prepare a single document that combined the CLR and the HSR with an Environmental Assessment (EA) of the proposed actions. An extensive team was assembled, comprising NPS staff from Harry S Truman NHS and MWRO, together with contractors headed by Anderson Hallas Architects, with Mundus Bishop Design, Inc. as Landscape Architects, and supported by separate electrical, mechanical, structural, and environmental engineers, a plaster conservator, a historian, and environmental compliance specialists. Work on the complex project began in 2011, and a Value Analysis: Choosing By Advantages workshop was held in July 2012 to evaluate action alternatives. The final report was issued in 2013.³⁸⁵

Rather than completing a basic structural and landscape documentation project, the HSR/CLR team oriented their work toward the future interpretation of the site, with the three action alternatives of the EA serving as guides. While the earlier HRS provided detailed historical background that could be used to develop the overall interpretive program, and an earlier Cultural Landscape Inventory provided basic data regarding the

³⁸⁴ Evans-Hatch, *Farm Roots and Family Ties* (2001).

³⁸⁵ *Harry S Truman National Historic Site, Truman Farm: Cultural Landscape Report, Historic Structure Report, & Environmental Assessment* (2013).

grounds, the HSR/CLR team identified as a problem that the current status of the Farm Home's restoration was not consistent with the intended period of interpretation, defined as Harry S Truman's association with the farm from 1906 to 1965, "which represents the time when Harry S Truman had a primary role in the management and operations of his family's farm."³⁸⁶ As the authors noted in their introduction, "The building treatment and appearance of the landscape to the period of significance is not consistent."³⁸⁷

The 2013 report presented a historical overview of the farm from the property that Harry S Truman's grandparents owned to its reduced scale by the 1960s and 1970s. The overview was drawn primarily from existing sources, including Cockrell's earlier HSR and HRS, and the 2001 HRS by Evans-Hatch Associates. The heart of the document lay in the extensive documentation and analysis of the existing conditions of the cultural landscape and the buildings original to the property, which included the Farm Home, the garage, and the poultry house. The report then provided detailed recommendations of treatments based on the preferred alternative, identified as "Farm, City, Nation." This action alternative called for a rehabilitation approach for the buildings and landscape. As described in the CLR, it did not require extensive modifications to the Farm Home, but allowed for interpretation of the Farm in terms of the influences of the farm and Truman as president. This approach included such topics as how life on the farm helped to shape the mature Harry S Truman and the reciprocal impact that Truman had on the farm while he lived there before WWI and in the years after his presidency, when he worked with his family to sell and develop portions of the farm while keeping the Farm Home.

The recommended approach to managing the Truman Farm called for very limited modifications to the Farm Home beyond improvements that had already been made, but allowed for more flexibility with regard to the cultural landscape and the outbuildings. This included repairing the existing contributing features in their historic locations and limited reconstruction of missing features such as stone posts. It also recommended determining low-impact ways to demarcate the boundaries of the Solomon Young Barn and Granary and restoring historic landscape elements such as the maple grove, the Farm Home yard, and the garden and barnyard. The recommended approach also incorporated modern developments into the overall site plan, including carefully defined views of the Truman Corners development which President Truman encouraged after his presidency, and the use of the newly-acquired former paint store for interpretive purposes.

The CLR is a comprehensive document with clearly-stated management goals and objectives that tie together rehabilitation of the Truman Farm site and interpretive approaches that complement the overall strategy for the Harry S Truman Historic District NHL. This useful report, however, does not overcome the problems that have plagued NPS's management of the site since its acquisition in 1993: inadequate budget to carry out the proposals, and staff to provide on-site management and interpretation. The park has never been allotted staff that could be dedicated to the operation of the Truman Farm, instead relying upon a shuffling of Independence-based staff combined with volunteers to

³⁸⁶ Ibid., 2-13.

³⁸⁷ Ibid., 1-1.

provide tours and maintain the site. Superintendent Apschnikat recalled that combination of logistics and budgets that curtailed the level of support that Independence could provide, given that the Truman Home and visitor center in Independence took priority:

what we basically could do is provide tours of the Farm Home, as much as we could, and just—that’s basically all we could do. And we could only do that on a limited basis because we didn’t have staff. And then, the logistics of it—because it’s—what? Twenty miles? You had the twenty-mile business. Okay, so you’re talking about: a person comes on duty, they gotta get themselves together. They gotta drive down there, and it was city traffic, as it were, so it wasn’t quick-quick.³⁸⁸

Largely due to the priority given the Truman Home in Independence and the need to maintain interpretive staff for its tours, the two parcels that were acquired south of the original 5.25 acres, in 2008 and in 2011, remain undeveloped. Planning remains ongoing for the site. Indeed, as Superintendent Dage has described, the years from 2013 to 2015 were particularly difficult ones for the park in terms of budget and staff shortfalls that reached critical levels; maintaining even the Independence Unit at the basic level of providing tours and operating the visitor center was a challenge. This left the Truman Farm in limbo, a situation that was exacerbated by the federal sequester in 2013, a radical reduction of all federal budgets, the results of which remain in 2016. As Dage remembered, “unfortunately, we had the sequester, and we really had to draw things in and figure out what we could continue to operate with the tiny, tiny staff, and without seasonals, and the Truman Farm has been closed since the sequester.”³⁸⁹

The 2013 CLR, therefore, is a valuable document that points the way to the development of the Truman Farm site. The buildings at the Truman Farm have been stabilized and maintained, and the site has its buffer of NPS property to the south. The management direction is in place, with a full knowledge of the resources and interpretive themes. The pieces are in place for the Truman Farm’s ability to tell the more complete story of Harry S Truman, both in Independence and down on the Farm.

³⁸⁸ Kenneth Apschnikat, oral history interview, February 29, 2016.

³⁸⁹ Carol Dage, oral history interview, January 7, 2016.

Chapter 8: Relations with the City of Independence

The Harry S Truman NHS, to a greater degree than many national parks, is intimately tied to its urban environment, in this case the City of Independence. This connection exists on several levels, creating a need for park staff to interact with citizens and officials throughout the city from the park's very beginnings to the present. At the most fundamental level, the principal object of the park, the Truman Home itself, is located within an intact, well-established, largely residential neighborhood with single-family homes on modest-sized lots. In its operation and management of this resource, park staff must, therefore, work with neighbors, not simply the owners of nearby buildings. Acquisition of the two Wallace Homes and the Noland Home in 1991, when NPS received the keys and access to the properties, created a small buffer of adjacent NPS-controlled homes around the Truman Home. Nevertheless, park staff must still recognize their responsibilities that all neighbors have to one another: keeping their property in good condition, not being too loud, being patient with other neighbors, and so forth.

At another level, the Truman Home is intimately connected to the neighborhood that surrounds it through the history of the Trumans. Bess Wallace Truman largely grew up in, and Harry Truman was a frequent visitor to, the neighborhood surrounding the home where they lived for much of their adult lives. Following their return to Independence in 1953, after Mr. Truman finished his terms as president of the United States, the Trumans resumed their private lives surrounded by their neighboring friends and relatives. Mr. Truman's daily walks through the neighborhood and into downtown Independence a few blocks away were legendary. As an interpretive project, therefore, designed to help visitors understand Harry S Truman, where he came from and returned to, it is impossible to separate the family in this particular home from the neighborhood that surrounds it.

In addition, the Truman Home is a part, not just of its organic neighborhood, but also of a historic district designated a National Historic Landmark (NHL) in 1971. As a unit of the National Park System, park staff have a responsibility to monitor changes, threats, and improvements to the NHL Historic District and report on them annually. The connection to the City of Independence is even more deeply entrenched as a result of a locally-protected heritage district designated by the city in 1974, the Truman Heritage District, which currently covers a portion of the NHL district. While park staff have no formal responsibilities with regard to changes within either the NHL district or the Truman Heritage District, the fate of both is crucial to the interpretive success of the Harry S Truman NHS. As federal employees, park staff have influential voices within debates over levels of protection afforded the NHL district and the Truman Heritage District, an influence that has been both celebrated and condemned at different times.

Finally, the Harry S Truman Home was designated a National Historic Site (NHS) and added to the National Park System at the same time that the City of Independence

was beginning to plan for a centennial celebration of Harry Truman's 100th birthday. The coincidental timing of establishment of the Harry S Truman NHS and Mr. Truman's 100th birthday was fortuitous, particularly for the City of Independence, which had only recently begun developing its appeal to tourists. The city's pitch to attract tourists, moreover, was heavily flavored with historical themes. Not only was the city the home of Harry S Truman, but it was the historical starting-point, known as the "jumping-off point," for several of the historic trails that led eastern settlers to the west in the mid-nineteenth century including the California and Oregon Trails, and, briefly, the Santa Fe Trail. This historical connection resulted in the self-proclaimed municipal moniker of "Queen City of the Trails." Following close on the heels of the creation of the Truman Heritage District in 1974, the city's first historic house museum, the Bingham-Waggoner Estate, was purchased in 1979. By the early 1980s, as former park Historian Jon Taylor noted in a recent book, "the city's newly created tourism department would eclipse the chamber of commerce as the leading proponent of promoting Independence as a major tourist center."³⁹⁰ Having a brand-new National Historic Site based on the very popular former president, Harry S Truman, in the City of Independence came as a boon to the city's efforts to promote itself as a tourist destination of historical interest. As a result, city officials were keen to promote the site, encouraged its speedy opening, and offered to work closely with NPS to ensure its success.

All these connections brought NPS staff, from the very first to the most recent, into close contact with city officials and City Council members who could provide assistance when needed and also appreciated the prestige that having a National Historic Site in the city entailed. At the same time, these connections brought NPS staff into the world of city politics, which all agreed could be challenging. Several points of contact were particularly important to the development of the Harry S Truman NHS. City support for the initial implementation and opening of the park, including providing space for both visitor contact and administrative offices, was crucial, and coordinating with the city on a shuttle service; commenting on ordinances and management decisions that impacted the NHL Historic District, working to expand the NHL district; and coordinating with the city's tourism program became integral parts of the park's management program.

The City and Initial Implementation of the Park

Given its interest in promoting tourism based on historic resources, the City of Independence offered its support for the development of the Truman Home from the very earliest days of NPS involvement. Two men in particular were key to securing this support: the Director of the Harry S. Truman Library, Benedict Zobrist, and the City of Independence's Historic Preservation Officer, W. Patrick "Pat" O'Brien. In addition to his position at the Truman Library, Zobrist was deeply involved in the cause of historic preservation in the city, was eager to protect and promote sites associated with the Trumans, and had served on the city's Heritage Commission. He was well-known and well-respected throughout the city and provided both guidance and introductions for the

³⁹⁰ Taylor, *A President, a Church, and Trails West*, 138.

early NPS staff. O'Brien, a 1972 graduate of Central Missouri State University with a degree in history, was appointed as the city's archival technician in 1977 while finishing his MA in History at the University of Missouri-Kansas City. His position gradually became Historic Preservation Officer for the city. By the time NPS became involved with the Truman Home in late 1982, O'Brien was coordinating the city's oversight of the Truman Heritage District. According to the notebook containing handwritten telephone notes from Andy Ketterson's initial contacts on November 4, 1982, Ketterson first called the Federal Protective Service regarding engaging security guards for the Truman Home. Following that vital call, his next call was to O'Brien, followed by a call to Zobrist. These two men would be crucial throughout the initial planning for securing the city's support.

The Independence Fire Marshall and Building Inspector toured the Truman Home shortly after Mrs. Truman died in October 1982, before MWRO even began its planning efforts. This inspection had two useful results. First, the inspection identified problems with the home's electrical wiring, which was badly out of date and dangerous. As Ketterson recalled of the building inspector, "I think as he went through the house he unplugged things. And one of the things that we did when we finally did things was a rewiring of the house. We were greatly concerned about electrical fire."³⁹¹ Tom Richter similarly recalled that "they were the ones that pointed out the inadequate electrical system, particularly when they saw the little sleeping room of the president that they had simply poked a hole through the wall of one of the other bedrooms and put through an extension cord and that was the source of power in there."³⁹² The second useful result was that the Fire Marshall took a series of photographs inside the home, the earliest photographs after Mrs. Truman's death. In early 1983, O'Brien arranged for the Fire Department to loan the negatives to Regional Curator John Hunter, who had prints made from the negatives. These prints would prove useful for the early curatorial efforts.³⁹³

Ranger-in-Charge Tom Richter began work at the Truman Home in January 1983, with an office initially in the Truman Library at Zobrists' invitation. An important component of Richter's charge from Ketterson was to establish and maintain a working relationship with the City of Independence. As he recalled, "My marching orders while I was there by myself were basically not to make any real firm commitments in terms of policy or what direction we were going to take with the home, but at the same time to keep friendships or develop friendships and working relationships with these different interests." As Richter noted, Zobrist was an invaluable guide to fostering and maintaining those relationships, particularly within "the complex political situation in Independence."³⁹⁴ Superintendent Norm Reigle recalled the underlying complexity of Independence's political situation:

³⁹¹ F.A. "Andy" Ketterson, oral history interview, August 5, 1991.

³⁹² Thomas P. Richter, oral history interview, August 27, 1990.

³⁹³ John E. Hunter, MWRO to W. Patrick O'Brien, City of Independence, February 14, 1983; MWRO files, L58 (HSTR).

³⁹⁴ Richter, oral history interview, August 27, 1990.

there's no such thing as a Republican in the city of Independence, but there are different kinds of Democrats, and there are different kind [sic] of Democrat clubs in the city of Independence. And to be successful you've got to be able to deal with both sides, and that sometimes involves quite a bit of tightrope walking. The faction that was in power when we set up the park is not the one that's in power now [1989]. We've been able to work successfully with both sides and have tried to stay neutral, but it involves quite a bit of juggling in that regard.³⁹⁵

Chapter 3 recounted negotiations that Superintendent Reigle had with the City of Independence regarding use of the historic Fire Station No. 1, first for a ticketing and visitor staging area on the first floor and then for administrative offices on the second floor. At this point, however, it is important to note that the City of Independence was eager to have the visitor center for the new historic site close to downtown for two reasons: to ease parking congestion in the Truman Home's neighborhood and to draw visitors to the cultural and commercial attractions in and around the courthouse square.

Tourism: Parking, Shuttles, and the City

Unfortunately, historic preservation was one of the issues that made the political situation in Independence complex when NPS staff began its planning work. As discussed later in this chapter, preparations to open the Truman Home took place at the same time as an acrimonious debate over the status of the Truman Heritage District, and feelings were running high between the various sides. As Richter recalled of his discussions with the Jackson County Historical Society, "there was a sort of rivalry between the society and some of these other anti-historic preservation interests in the town. The city council was split along those lines."³⁹⁶ Fortunately, however, tourism was becoming increasingly important to the City of Independence, a sentiment shared by nearly all in the various political factions, and NPS represented a vital component of the city's tourism plans. As Reigle recalled of the city's political situation and NPS's role in it, Independence is "going to be a political little town, a political little animal. But I think most of the people that are in politics here realize the importance of tourism to the overall economy of this city, and that gives us a strong bargaining chip, too."³⁹⁷

From the very earliest contacts between NPS and city officials, especially O'Brien, parking was an important concern for the city. Because the Truman Home is set in a historic residential neighborhood, a sudden influx of tourists there would quickly create problems. The issue of parking was one of the first topics covered in Ketterson's initial meeting with O'Brien in November 1982, before NPS's involvement was yet

³⁹⁵ Reigle, oral history interview, November 20, 1989.

³⁹⁶ Richter, oral history interview, August 27, 1990.

³⁹⁷ Norm Reigle, oral history interview, December 13, 1985.

official, even before they toured the Truman Home for the first time. According to O'Brien, the Heritage Commission had already held discussions regarding parking.³⁹⁸ At this point, the location of a visitor center and ticketing area had not yet been broached, and there was a possibility that tourists would come directly to the Truman Home for tickets.

Two solutions to the parking dilemma were floated in the early months of planning. First, the First Baptist Church, which is located one and one-half blocks west of the Truman Home on West Truman Road, offered use of its parking lot for visitors from Monday through Saturday. Even this offer, in the political climate then surrounding historic preservation in Independence, had an edge to it. First Baptist Church, in announcing its plans to build a new sanctuary and expand its parking lot, was the catalyst for calls to restrict the size and impact of the Heritage District in the early 1980s. The pastor of First Baptist Church, Reverend John Hughes, was leading the charge regarding changes to the Heritage District, but, as Richter recalled, Hughes "at one time. . . offered the use of his parking lot six days a week. He wouldn't let us use it on Sundays, but the other days of the week he said that we'd be more than welcome to use the parking lot. Of course, other people felt that was just him trying to. . . as a way for us to endorse his parking lot, because he was wanting to expand his parking lot, and jeopardize perhaps some of the other part of the neighborhood."³⁹⁹ In August 1983, the Independence City Council passed a resolution encouraging NPS and First Baptist Church to take joint action toward providing parking facilities for the Truman Home's visitors.⁴⁰⁰

The second option for parking was to provide a shuttle bus that could bring visitors from a central location to the Truman Home. Richter first proposed the idea in a meeting with a coalition of Board of Tourism and Heritage Commission members in April 1983. Amid concerns that NPS might acquire property to create a parking space and would do so without input from the city, Richter, according to news reports, "suggested that a shuttle bus operation anchored at the Truman Library should be a major consideration when parking plans are made." Molly Nesbitt, a member of the City Council and the Board of Tourism, raised concerns that such a shuttle bus would ignore the other tourist attractions in the city. The meeting's attendees reached a preliminary consensus that a "shuttle bus that would take a circular route through the city to various tourist points in addition to the Truman home" would be an important objective of the coalition group.⁴⁰¹ Nesbitt then took the lead for the city in developing plans for a shuttle bus system that could support all of the city's tourist sites, a plan which NPS formally announced as its preferred approach in late August 1983.⁴⁰²

³⁹⁸ Memorandum, Chief, Cultural Resources Management, MWRO to Associate Regional Director, Planning and Resource Preservation, MWRO, November 16, 1982; files of Harry S Truman NHS, L58 (MWR-PC).

³⁹⁹ Richter, oral history interview, August 27, 1990.

⁴⁰⁰ Bruce Lowrey, City of Independence to Richter, August 11, 1983; files of Harry S Truman NHS,

⁴⁰¹ "Legislation Must Come Before Parking," *Examiner* (Independence, MO), April 12, 1983; clipping in files of Harry S Truman NHS.

⁴⁰² "Park Service Favors Shuttle Buses for Tourist Visits to Truman Home," *Kansas City Star*, August 31, 1983; clipping in files of Harry S Truman NHS.

The idea of connecting all the city's tourist locations, including the Truman Home, with a shuttle bus was a powerful draw. Nesbitt took the lead in promoting and developing the shuttle bus program, and NPS staff, including Richter and Reigle, actively supported it. In September 1983, the city's Tourism Advisory Board requested that the City Council issue an RFP to provide shuttle bus service along a route that included seven sites: Truman Library and Museum, Truman Home, Mormon district, Missouri Pacific Depot, Bingham-Waggoner Estate, Independence Square, and Vaile Mansion.⁴⁰³ Proposals were due in November 1983, and, in December, a contractor was selected to provide three buses with service every fifteen minutes. The shuttle would be free to users, and the plan initially was to offer the service from April 1 to October 1 of each year.⁴⁰⁴ The city's contract with the shuttle bus operator soon expanded to providing year-round service and was generally a successful program. As Richter recalled, "from the beginning we found it important." One of the advantages to the Truman Home, he observed, was the ability to get a more complete picture of Truman's personal and public lives, a feature that was strengthened by the range of historic sites throughout Independence: "the shuttle really enhanced that by providing a unifying element to get people from one place to another."⁴⁰⁵ There were some problems with the service, including that the shuttle service was run under contract to the city rather than NPS, the number of sites visited occasionally impacted the bus schedule, causing delays for visitors to the Truman Home who were on time-sensitive tour schedules, and occasional misinformation from the shuttle drivers. Despite these minor setbacks, however, the busses remained in operation through 1990, when the service was discontinued. The city had funded the shuttle with lodging tax revenue. The Independence Chamber of Commerce advocated that roadside billboards would be a better use of the tax revenue than the shuttle, and the city agreed. About the loss of bus service, Richter noted that "I do think it does handicap a bit the original plan that we had for the visitor's experience in Independence."⁴⁰⁶

Although the City of Independence ended the shuttle contract in 1990, the goal of connecting the historic sites in Independence for tourism purposes remained among the city's private leadership. An organization called Uptown Independence, Inc. began developing plans in early 1991 for a walking trail through Independence that would guide visitors on foot past some of the city's landmarks, including the Truman Home, the courthouse square, and the 1859 Jail Museum, with funding from private donations matched by the City of Independence. The organization was supported by Mayor Barbara Potts, and Benedict Zobrist served on its board of directors. The National Park Service had concerns about the potential for changes within the NHL Historic District that could include the addition of sculptures, lighting, signs, and plaques. At his request, Superintendent Ron Mack gave a presentation to Uptown Independence, Inc. members in May 1991. He stressed the potential for adverse impacts to the NHL district and declared

⁴⁰³ "Tourist Panel Seeks Shuttle Bus Service," *Examiner*, September 29, 1983; clipping in files of Harry S Truman NHS.

⁴⁰⁴ "Tourist Shuttle Bus Closer to Reality," *Examiner*, December 3, 1983; clipping in files of Harry S Truman NHS.

⁴⁰⁵ Richter, oral history interview, August 27, 1990.

⁴⁰⁶ *Ibid.* See also Reigle to Bill Bullard, City of Independence, December 12, 1984; Memorandum, Superintendent to all employees, Harry S Truman NHS, April 11, 1985; files of Harry S Truman NHS, A8817 (HSTR).

“that maintaining the integrity of the cultural landscape is a priority of the National Park Service and city of Independence, and that maintaining the historic character and integrity of the National Historic Landmark District has equal importance and priority to that of maintaining the historic character of Harry S Truman National Historic Site. Any construction in the historic district would directly conflict with the National Park Service Mission in Independence.” Mack then strongly requested the organization provide NPS with an opportunity to review the designs for the walking trail.⁴⁰⁷

Uptown Independence, Inc. had already selected an AE firm for the project, and provided Mack a “courtesy review” of the preliminary plans in June 1992. The project stalled for several years, however, but was revitalized in 1995 when the City of Independence took the lead. The plan, at that point, was to establish a “trailhead” at the northwest corner of Main and Truman Road, diagonally across Truman Road from the Harry S Truman NHS visitor center. The trail would lead visitors on foot past nine historic sites including the Truman Home. It was to be funded by a \$39,000 grant from the Missouri Department of Transportation and a \$10,000 donation from the Independence Chamber of Commerce. In 1996, the Missouri SHPO determined that the project would have no adverse effects on any historic properties. The project stalled again, however, until, in August 1998, City Council approved spending nearly \$100,000 to construct the walking trail, while a mix of funds would also come from federal sources and the Independence Chamber of Commerce. Construction began the next month, with the “trailhead,” featuring an open pavilion containing exhibits and brochures, shifted to the southwest corner of Main and Truman Road, directly across Main from the visitor center. This was completed by December 1998, and construction on the remaining phases continued through 1999. Later in 1999, Superintendent James Sanders approved the use of donation funds from Eastern National Park and Monument Association to pay for three plaques as part of the walking trail to identify sites associated with Truman. As Sanders noted, although the walking trail was a city project, NPS was a partner in the project, and “I am viewing this project as an expansion of our interpretive program through private funding. Since we are limited to our properties, this project will help the visitor better understand Truman’s relationship to the community in which he lived.”⁴⁰⁸

National Historic Landmark District

Chapter 1 recounted the development of the Harry S Truman Historic District NHL, designated in 1971. Three years later, the City of Independence created the Harry S. Truman Heritage District. When created in 1974, the Heritage District boundary

⁴⁰⁷ Memorandum, Superintendent to Regional Director, MWRO, May 16, 1991; MWRO files K18.

⁴⁰⁸ Email, James Sanders to Valerie Steffen, November 5, 1999; see also Ron Mack to Benedict Zobrist, June 12, 1992; “Truman Historic Walking Trail,” information sheet, n.d. [1995]; Raymond V. Wallace, Advisory Council for Historic Preservation to Gerald J. Reihsen, Federal Highway Administration, November 25, 1996; “Sidewalk Coming for Truman Road,” Examiner, August 18, 1998; Howard B. Penrod, City of Independence to Independence Square Merchants, September 3, 1998; “First Phase of Truman Walking Tour Nearly Ready,” *Kansas City Star*, December 12, 1998. Files of Harry S Truman NHS.

coincided with the NHL district, which included the North Delaware corridor from Highway 24 at the northern end to Farmer Street, then extended east along Farmer Street to include the buildings on the east side of Pleasant Street south to Lexington Avenue. The boundary then followed Lexington Avenue, lying south of the Truman Home, to North Union Street, included the east side of North Union Street to an alley between Truman Road and White Oak Street, then followed that alley back to North Delaware. In 1979, the City Council passed an ordinance to expand the Heritage District substantially to the east and the west, more than doubling the area, subject to review by the Independence Heritage Commission.

This expansion of the Heritage District was part of the city's budding attempt to draw tourists to Independence using the intimate connection between the city and Harry S Truman, still among the more popular U.S. presidents. At the same time, NPS was beginning its initial planning for the Truman Home. However, conflicts within Independence over the Heritage District were quickly coming to a head. The Heritage Commission, which had responsibility for protecting the architectural and landscape integrity of the Heritage District by reviewing proposed changes and making recommendations, had very limited power since its determinations could be overridden by City Council. City Council had already granted several exemptions to churches within the Heritage District boundary. The most influential of these churches was First Baptist Church, located in a historic house of worship on Truman Road just one block east of the Truman Home and clearly visible from the rear of the Home. In December 1982, Rev. John Hughes, pastor of First Baptist Church, requested that an alley behind (north of) the church between Pleasant and Spring Streets be closed as one part of a planned expansion that included building a new sanctuary adjacent to their historic building. At the same time, the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (RLDS) Church demolished several buildings adjacent to, but outside of, the Heritage District, raising the specter of significant alterations to the built environment that formed the context for Harry Truman's former neighborhood.⁴⁰⁹

The plans for redevelopment proposed by First Baptist Church in particular led to a crisis for the Heritage Commission. City Council members who supported the church's plans for expansion, which included the demolition of up to three homes, began questioning the validity of Heritage Commission review of the district. These members were concerned that the restrictions imposed by the Heritage Commission thwarted development in the downtown area, which First Baptist Church pledged to support by building its new building adjacent to the original. Churches had been exempted from review by the Heritage Commission, but First Baptist's location within the Heritage District provided uncertainty given the Heritage Commission's design review role. The controversy simmered through 1983 and into 1984. In February 1984, City Council voted to reduce the size of the Heritage District to the North Delaware corridor from Maple Avenue to Highway 24, and stretching one block to the east and west of North Delaware between Truman Road and Lexington Avenue. For the first time, the local Heritage District, over which the Heritage Commission had review authority, was smaller than the

⁴⁰⁹ Taylor, *A President, a Church, and Trails West*, 129-46 presents an excellent overview of the political discussions surrounding the Heritage District, and forms the basis for this discussion.

NHL Historic District. This left portions of the NHL district, designed to preserve the neighborhood through which Mr. Truman walked on a regular basis, without substantial preservation protection since only local designation can be enforced through zoning.⁴¹⁰

As discussed earlier, Richter's charge from MWRO upon entering duty in early 1983 was to foster relationships with the city, a task which he soon found required balancing among the various political factions. At the same time, as a representative of NPS, he was in a position to advocate for the protection of the NHL Historic District. The dangers of combining these two intentions, making peace with all factions and seeking to protect the NHL Historic District, became evident quickly, as Benedict Zobrist's experience showed. For several years, Zobrist had been a member of the Heritage Commission and an advocate for protecting the NHL district. As Richter recalled, "it was sort of a no-win situation because there was such a fierce division in the town between those that were strongly for historic preservation and those that were against it as being an infringement on property rights and so forth, that it was a sort of a no-win situation for Dr. Zobrist." As a result, Richter's role as the National Park Service official representing the protection of the NHL district "was sort of walking on eggs in that respect. If these meetings were coming up, these public meetings, I was always very careful to check with either Mr. [J.L.] Dunning, when he was the regional director," or with Dunning's successor, Randall Pope. Richter was occasionally called upon to give presentations to City Council to state NPS's position on matters regarding the NHL Historic District. At these times, he noted, "I would sort of go along with Dr. Zobrist's point of view, that I felt the National Park Service historic preservation is just part of our mandate, and I felt it was up to us certainly to set a good example at the very least. And with the fact that the national landmark district being there, I felt we had an added obligation to stand up for the integrity of that landmark district." Zobrist, he concluded "felt he'd been in the trenches for quite a while in that respect and was looking forward to us taking our turn there as the leading advocate."⁴¹¹

Richter, and Superintendent Reigle after he arrived in Independence, sought, above all else, to tie the value of the Truman Home and its interpretive potential to the integrity of the NHL Historic District. The staff in Independence regularly received support for protecting the NHL Historic District from officials in both MWRO and the Washington headquarters office. Indeed, NPS Director Russell Dickinson attended a meeting in Independence in the summer of 1983 in association with the Oregon-California Trails Association. While in town, he toured the Truman Home, actively supporting its opening in time for the May 1984 Truman Centennial celebration. Dickinson also toured the surrounding neighborhood, and, Richter noted, "very quickly realized the importance of the whole neighborhood as adding to the significance of the home itself and was very much taken by that."⁴¹² The following winter, as City Council was preparing to vote on reducing the size of the local Heritage District, Dickinson responded to a critical letter from City Council member Mollie Nesbitt, explaining that

⁴¹⁰ Ibid., 146-58. More detailed information on the issues and debates can be found throughout Chapter 5 of Taylor's book.

⁴¹¹ Richter, oral history interview, August 27, 1990.

⁴¹² Ibid.

“Without the National Historic Landmark District, visitors to the Harry S Truman NHS will not be able to fully understand and appreciate the environment in which President and Mrs. Truman lived.”⁴¹³

At approximately the same time that City Council voted to reduce the size of the Truman Heritage District and leave portions of the NHL district without local protection, NPS planning began for the park’s initial GMP. Debates over the expansionist alternatives, as discussed in Chapter 4, thus took place in the immediate aftermath of the bruising political fight over the size of the Heritage District, and sensitivities remained raw. The impetus to identify ways to protect the unprotected sections of the NHL Historic District and to maintain its overall integrity clearly drew from potential future changes to the city laws pertaining to historic preservation as NPS sought to preserve the neighborhood surrounding the Truman Home. Although the final GMP did not contain the stronger protections for the Truman Historic District that were included as action alternatives due to opposition from the local community and some in the NPS, the GMP did include a provision for a preservation trust that could acquire easements to protect individual properties. Regional Director Charles Odegaard had developed this idea during the GMP process as a middle ground, and it remained through several of the draft alternatives reviewed by the public to the final GMP as a recommendation for potential future implementation. While recognizing that the proposed preservation trust for the surrounding neighborhood would still require Congressional authorization, the GMP reassured City Council that neither condemnation nor federal ownership “is a desirable solution to the problem of incompatible development in the area visible from the Truman Home.” In the face of some opposition within the city, however, “the National Park Service continues to propose the Truman neighborhood trust as a way of reinforcing and helping ensure the success of the city’s historic preservation efforts. . . . the character of this neighborhood will best be preserved not by federal management but by local residents working together actively to maintain their community and cultural heritage.”⁴¹⁴ Superintendent Reigle, recalling the intensity of discussions over the GMP, noted that “if I could say there was a real benefit to doing the GMP, it’s that that [preservation trust] is in place and it will not get any political support until something dramatic happens in the neighborhood. . . .so that’s in place, and it’ll just need to be dusted off at the right time.”⁴¹⁵

Staff from Harry S Truman NHS continued to monitor the status of the NHL Historic District in the years following implementation of the GMP in 1987. While threats to the integrity of the NHL district itself continued through the 1990s, the greater concern was to historic buildings that lay close to the existing district but which had no regulatory protection either locally or federally. In the annual status report for National Historic Landmarks in 1996, for example, Superintendent Apschnikat warned that, in the past year “there have been demolitions to structures just outside the NHL boundaries on West Maple. These structures, although not in direct view of the Truman home, were a

⁴¹³ Russell Dickenson, n.d. [1984] to Mollie Nesbitt, quoted in Taylor, *A President, a Church, and Trails West*, 157.

⁴¹⁴ *General Management Plan, Harry S Truman National Historic Site, Missouri* (1987), vi-v.

⁴¹⁵ Reigle, oral history interview, December 22, 1989.

part of the cultural landscape of the neighborhood that Mr. Truman would have recognized if he were living.” Most buildings within the NHL Historic District appeared to be relatively stable, he continued, and those buildings within the NHL Historic District but not subject to Heritage Commission review appeared to be safe from demolition. Truman Memorial Hall, at the corner of West Maple and Pleasant Avenue and within the NHL Historic District, was then under study by the city “to determine what can be done to preserve this structure for community use. The staff of Harry S Truman National Historic Site is actively involved with a committee studying the future of the building.”⁴¹⁶ As Superintendent Sanders recalled of the city in the 2000s, demolitions were a persistent problem in the areas adjacent to the NHL Historic District. Buildings with absentee landlords were a particular concern: “they would let them go into disrepair, and then the city would have funds, and they would go in and demolish them and then bill through taxes the cost of demolishing them. We were losing historic structures rather than find ways of repairing them and keeping them, you know, intact. . . . I was able to stop more demolition of structures than I lost.” In the process, he hoped to change the attitude of city officials.⁴¹⁷

All superintendents at Harry S Truman NHS coordinated closely with city officials, particularly the Historic Preservation Officer and the Planning Director. By the mid-1990s, Patrick Steele served as the city’s Preservation Officer, and Superintendent Apschnikat worked closely with Steele to help make sure that the NHL district remained intact and to protect as much of the area surrounding it as possible:

the whole District was important that is a key part of Truman’s story, you know. That he walked the District. He knew all the people. He went and played poker at so-and-so’s house. . . . And that was so close to the Library. All of that was kind of tied in with the big picture for the Truman Home. And working with the community and others that were part of that was really, really important to the—keeping it together for the Park Service.⁴¹⁸

Apschnikat’s successor, James Sanders, was even more deeply involved with the affairs of the city, spending, by his recollection, approximately fifty percent of his time on activities outside the park, activities oriented primarily toward historic preservation and protection of buildings both within and without the NHL district. This included coordination with Steele, and “with Missouri and United States Housing and Urban Development Office, Missouri Historic Preservation Office, and a private realtor by the name of Cohen Esrey in saving and rehabilitating eleven historic structures within the National Historic Landmark District for use as single-family residences and rental apartments, and they brought them back to their historic, exterior appearance.” Sanders also served on the Heritage Commission and supported development of a new Historic Preservation Plan for the city and design guidelines for the NHL district.⁴¹⁹ At the same time, Sanders supported the Mid-Town Truman Road Corridor Development

⁴¹⁶ National Historic Landmark Status Report Update, August 1, 1996; files of Harry S Truman NHS.

⁴¹⁷ James Sanders, oral history interview, February 25, 2016.

⁴¹⁸ Kenneth Apschnikat, oral history interview, February 29, 2016.

⁴¹⁹ Sanders, oral history interview, February 25, 2016.

Corporation, which, by 2000, was working on rehabilitation of six buildings just outside the NHL Historic District on Truman Road.⁴²⁰

As both Apschnikat and Sanders explained at various times, concerns for the integrity of the neighborhood surrounding the Truman Home were directed more toward the blocks that surrounded the NHL district than those already within the boundary. There was a growing awareness among many in the preservation community, both within the City of Independence and in NPS, that the NHL district should be larger to include more of the portions of town through which Mr. Truman walked, including the downtown area surrounding the Jackson County Courthouse. An expansion of that magnitude, however, would be a time-consuming and, therefore, expensive, process. In early 2000, Regional Architectural Historian Rachel Franklin-Weekley alerted Superintendent Sanders that regional funds had become available to pay for a revised NHL nomination. The firm of Evans-Hatch & Associates was then preparing the Historic Resource Study for the two Wallace Homes, the Noland Home, and the Truman Farm. Franklin-Weekley suggested that NPS approach the firm with an offer to modify their existing contract to include preparation of a revised NHL nomination. With regard to the scope of work, Franklin-Weekley suggested to Sanders that the expansion include the Jackson County Courthouse, the town square, cultural landscapes, “and any additional properties that you or Patrick Steele have in mind, for possible inclusion in the revised nomination.” The revised nomination, she noted, “would still focus on Truman.” Sanders, unsurprisingly, quickly agreed to her plan and asked that he be the one to approach Patrick Steele. Historian Ron Cockrell, likewise, gave his assent to the proposal.⁴²¹

Evans-Hatch & Associates agreed to the added scope of work and began, in the fall of 2000, the work of determining preliminary boundaries that would meet NHL standards for the proposed expansion. Believing that the Heritage District’s boundaries were “too ‘soft’ to warrant inclusion in an NHL district,” they made initial recommendations of an expansion that included the Independence Courthouse square on the east and the Truman Library on the north.⁴²² Superintendent Sanders approved the new boundary recommendations with minor exceptions in March 2001, and Evans-Hatch worked on the revised NHL nomination through 2001 and into 2002, focusing their efforts on the hundreds of building histories and descriptions that the nomination required. The document was available for review at 95% complete by the summer of 2002. It included requests from the city that the boundary be expanded to incorporate several other buildings, including the 1827 Log Courthouse on West Kansas and the 1910 City Hall on South Main, and that Truman Station, Trinity Episcopal Church, and Second Baptist Church (attended by the Trumans’ long-time cook, Vietta Garr), among others that would be considered as non-contiguous resources. The 95% draft was also sent to the

⁴²⁰ National Historic Landmark Status Report, June 27, 2000; files of Harry S Truman NHS, H34 (MWR/FDO-RD) HSTR.

⁴²¹ Email, Rachel Franklin-Weekley to James Sanders, April 13, 2000; Sanders to Franklin-Weekley, April 14, 2000; Ron Cockrell to Sanders, April 14, 2000; files of Harry S Truman NHS.

⁴²² Gail and Michael Evans-Hatch to Rachel Franklin-Weekley, January 18, 2001; files of Harry S Truman NHS, Superintendent James Sanders collection.

NRHP staff in Washington, D.C. for review, but there was no response from them by late September.⁴²³

The revised draft was completed by early 2003, when public notice of NPS' intent to expand the NHL district was published and public comments were invited for a 60-day period. By this time, however, efforts to expand the Truman NHL Historic District were running into complications presented by the NRHP staff and by administrative decisions in Washington, D.C. In particular, NPS Director Frances P. Mainella had recently ordered a review of the entire NHL program, placing on hold all ongoing nominations until that review was complete. The delay was a blow to those in Independence who had worked for nearly three years to complete the nomination. When the review was completed, the NHL program was reinstated, and revisions continued to the Truman historic district nomination through 2004 and 2005. By this time, Sanders had left Independence for duty as Superintendent of the Lincoln Home National Historic Site in Springfield, Illinois, but he remained actively involved with the Truman NHL nomination by permission of the Regional Director. In 2006, when a finalized draft was ready to be reviewed by NPS's Cultural Resources staff in Washington, D.C., another glitch occurred. Late that year, the authorization for National Park System Advisory Board ended, which caused all committees, including the NHL Committee, to stop functioning. As Franklin-Weekley explained in an email to Sanders,

The NPS powers that be in the NPS have been working on getting the Advisory Board re-authorized, but it hasn't happened yet. . . . The April 07 meeting of the NHL Committee was cancelled because it had no authority to meet. The items on that agenda are on hold, waiting for re-authorization of the Advisory Board and NHL Committee. When those entities are back up and running, the actions on the April agenda will have to go through the 60-day notice period again, then the meeting will be held.

A decision regarding the Truman NHL district was, therefore, pushed back even further.⁴²⁴

This bureaucratic confusion was exacerbated by concerns within the NRHP staff about the NHL nomination itself. Several within the Washington Office felt that the justification for the district was tenuous, that the connections to Harry Truman were not clear enough and, when clear, that they might not be enough to justify the NHL designation. By that time, Evans-Hatch & Associates had completed their work, and it was left to Franklin-Weekley to continue making the extensive revisions that would solidify the significant connection between Harry S Truman and areas within the proposed NHL district expansion. In December 2008, Sanders responded to a resident of the proposed district who questioned the long delay:

⁴²³ Review comments: Harry S Truman Historic District NHL nomination, 95% draft, September 18, 2002; attached to email, Rachel Franklin-Weekley to Sanders, September 24, 2002; files of Harry S Truman NHS.

⁴²⁴ Email, Franklin-Weekley to Sanders, April 15, 2007; files of Harry S Truman NHS, James A. Sanders collection.

Through the years, we added more and more details to each building in the NHL expanded District. We currently have the most complete and maybe the largest NHL nomination that our Washington Office personnel have ever seen (their words). However, they still came back with negative comments and refused to approve the nomination. Finally in September 2008, we asked for a conference call with them and their supervisors. In that conference call, we were able to get their concurrence.⁴²⁵

Progress remained slow through the winter of 2008-09, due, in part, to the failure to appoint a National Park System Advisory Board. The change of administrations between President George W. Bush and President Barack Obama required that all political appointees submit their resignations. It took several months after President Obama's inauguration in January 2009 to fill positions throughout the Executive Branch, including the National Park System Advisory Board. A breakthrough of sorts came in the late spring of 2009, however, when Associate Director for Cultural Resources Jan Matthews, whose position included being Keeper of the National Register, visited Independence. According to Franklin-Weekley, Matthews was influential in the September 2008 conference call which garnered support for the nomination. Matthews was in the area for meetings with the National Trust for Historic Preservation and requested a private tour of the Truman Home. Curator Carol Dage came to the site on her day off and provided Matthews with a detailed, private tour, and Ranger Jeff Wade provided additional information about the Truman NHL Historic District. In her email to Superintendent Larry Villalva thanking Dage and Wade for their tours, Matthews expressed her support for the NHL nomination. As Franklin-Weekley observed in an email to Sanders, "The point is, it's great that Jan [Matthews] took the time to visit the District. She's still very supportive of the expansion and will support it when it moves through the approval process."⁴²⁶

Finally, in 2010, the National Park System Advisory Board was reconstituted and began working its way through the backlog of nomination packages. In early November 2010, the Landmarks Subcommittee of the Advisory Board took up the matter of the Truman NHL Historic District and reported favorably.⁴²⁷ In 2011, more than a decade after it was first proposed, Secretary of the Interior Manuel Salazar approved the expanded Harry S Truman Historic District NHL. The scale of the expanded historic district is substantial, including 560 buildings of which 445 are contributing. The district also includes four sites and two objects, for a total of 451 contributing resources within 153 acres in and surrounding downtown Independence, some of which are discontinuous. The period of significance was defined as 1919-1972, the years when Truman lived in Independence, and contributing resources were defined as those that were associated with

⁴²⁵ Email, Sanders to Brian Snyder, December 22, 2008; files of Harry S Truman NHS, James Sanders collection.

⁴²⁶ Email, Franklin-Weekley to Sanders, June 10, 2009; see also email, Jan Matthews to Larry Villalva, May 17, 2009; files of Harry S Truman NHS.

⁴²⁷ "Effort to Expand Truman District Advances," *Examiner* (November 5, 2010; clipping attached to fax, Larry Villalva to Acting Deputy Directors, MWRO; files of Harry S Truman NHS.

Truman and his life in Independence and that retained a high degree of historic integrity. “Contributing resources,” the nomination continued, “represent and convey the historic sense of the district as Harry Truman knew and recognized it, even as those resources evolved and changed during Truman’s lifetime.” One of the sites included in the nomination was the street system “as a whole, composed of streets, curbs, gutters, light standards, etc.”⁴²⁸ The designation of the expanded NHL Historic District, which included courthouse square in downtown Independence, finally made possible the use of federal historic preservation tax credits for rehabilitation of many of the buildings on courthouse square, long a goal of the city’s succession of Historic Preservation managers. As Heather Carpini, the city’s Historic Preservation Manager at the time, noted in 2013 following a celebration of the 2011 designation, seven projects had begun the tax credit process in the previous nine months: “That is more tax credit projects than we have had in Independence in the last five years,” she said.⁴²⁹

Visitor Center: Fire Station No. 1, Courthouse

Discussion of Superintendent Reigle’s negotiations with the City of Independence regarding use of the historic Fire Station No. 1 on Main Street, first for a visitor center and subsequently as a headquarters office, was provided in Chapter 3. In his attempts to use the new Truman Home visitation to help support the city’s fledgling tourism program and draw tourists to downtown, and recognizing that the Truman Library would not have sufficient space, Reigle approached Mayor Barbara Potts about a city-owned location for the new site’s visitor services center in October 1984. At the time, the plan for the visitor services center was as a place to welcome visitors, provide them with preliminary information about the Truman Home and other historic sites in the City of Independence, and sell tickets for tours of the Home. “The mayor agreed with this,” he recalled, “a strategy was developed, a political strategy was developed to implement this, and through working with the mayor and several other council people at the time, we were able to sway the political opinion of the city council and get the job done.” During this process of coordinating with the mayor, city council, and Pat O’Brien, the city’s Historic Preservation Officer, the historic Fire Station No. 1 was identified as a potential site. No evidence was found during research for this administrative history for who first suggested the building. Reigle negotiated with the city to secure use of the first floor of the building, with the city performing necessary rehabilitation. In April 1984, following the fire that destroyed the former funeral home on West Maple that was being rehabilitated for use as administrative space for Harry S Truman NHS staff, the city also made the second floor of the fire station available on short notice, all on a rent-free basis.

One of the conditions of the agreement between NPS and the city regarding the fire station was that the city would provide for the building’s maintenance. This proved a

⁴²⁸ Evans-Hatch & Associates, Inc., and Rachel Franklin-Weekley, National Historic Landmark Nomination: Harry S Truman Historic District, 2011.

⁴²⁹ Carpini quoted in “District Honors Streets that Harry Truman Once Roamed,” *Kansas City Star*, May 4, 2013; clipping in files of Harry S Truman NHS.

cost-saving provision many times, though it put NPS staff in the position of relying on the city for necessary repairs. From the earliest occupancy of the building, for example, flooding was a recurring problem on the first floor. During heavy rains, water flowed in beneath the main entrance door, and the drains in the first floor were continually backed up. In August 1985, for example, heavy rains led to standing water in the visitor center, with visitors assisting Eastern National staff and NPS volunteers in mopping the floors. Calls to the mayor and to City Council members brought more assistance in mopping. City Council quickly authorized repairs to the drains, rebuilding the sidewalks, and installing new carpets in the first floor visitor center.⁴³⁰ Other work undertaken by the city included façade improvements such as brick repointing and replacing eight windows in the summer of 1992. In 1994, Superintendent Mack requested that the city replace the HVAC unit, particularly for the second-floor administrative offices. Since 1991, Mack explained, NPS had spent more than \$1400 on repairs to the air-conditioning system, which would freeze up regularly, and MWRO was no longer authorizing further expenses.⁴³¹

Under Superintendent Sanders, who entered on duty in June 1999, NPS coordinated with city officials to conduct official inspections of the building, resulting in a complete electrical rewiring of the building. The roof, which had allowed water to drip down onto desks in the second floor offices, was also repaired.⁴³² During this time, Sanders began negotiating with city and county officials regarding the possibility of relocating the NPS visitor center to the historic Jackson County Courthouse, which was then being rehabilitated. The city and county were then in negotiations regarding the restoration of the Courthouse and hoped to use the space for a variety of joint city-county functions including a visitor orientation center and a home for the Jackson County Historical Society. The county hoped to secure a two-million dollar grant from the State of Missouri, to which the county would add approximately \$500,000, in order to engage an architectural firm to develop plans for waterproofing, stabilizing, and performing other structural repairs to the building.⁴³³ Sanders, deeply involved in the city's historic preservation issues, was convinced that NPS could set a good example by assisting with the redevelopment and adaptive reuse of the historic building and actively supported development of a visitor orientation center in the courthouse with the idea that NPS would relocate there.

Sanders participated regularly in planning meetings for the proposed new visitor orientation center through the summer of 2000.⁴³⁴ The State of Missouri approved one

⁴³⁰ Memorandum, Administrative Technician, Harry S Truman NHS to Regional Director, MWRO, August 15, 1985; files of Harry S Truman NHS, K18 MWR-MI.

⁴³¹ Ronald Mack to Frank Davis, City of Independence Historic Preservation Officer, October 31, 1994; files of Harry S Truman NHS, D50 HSTR; Tourism Advisory Board Minutes, June 23, 1992; files of Harry S Truman NHS.

⁴³² James Sanders, oral history interview, February 25, 2016.

⁴³³ Rondell F. Stewart, Mayor, City of Independence, to Kathryn Shields, Jackson County Executive, February 16, 2000; files of Harry S Truman NHS

⁴³⁴ Memorandum, Stephanie Roush, City of Independence to VOC Study Team, June 22, 2000; Visitor Orientation Center Development Strategy Meeting Report: July 10, 2000; files of Harry S Truman NHS, James Sanders Collection.

million dollars for the project, and the county designated \$500,000 for use in redeveloping the courthouse. In the spring of 2000, the county hired Museum Management Consultants, Inc. from San Francisco, California, to assist in development of plans for the new facility. The consultants provided a Critical Issues report in May 2000.⁴³⁵ Funding proved to be the biggest issue, and, by 2004, planning meetings were still ongoing but with no direct plans for rehabilitation of the courthouse. Although Sanders continued to take part in committee meetings, no subsequent plans formed to relocate the park's administrative or visitor center functions to the courthouse. Sanders later expressed regret that the plans did not come to fruition:

I was hoping that we could have moved into the historic Jackson County Courthouse, as we had agreed to with the city. That was going to be our new Visitor Center. That was going to be their Visitor Center. We were going to have offices over there, a whole headquarters. Our entire staff in one place. . . . it was all part of the restoration of the courthouse. Yes. That was all part of it. That would be where we would draw people into Independence. That would be the major Visitor Center.⁴³⁶

The draw of using the former Fire Station No. 1 on a rent-free basis was powerful, but was not to last. The nation-wide financial challenges of the early 2000s hit Independence, and the city announced that, beginning in FY05, it would require NPS to pay rent, with the revenue to be used to maintain the building, which needed regular upgrades. Rent was to be \$12.50 per square foot, and, at 4,800 square feet, the annual charge would come to approximately \$60,000. In April 2003, Sanders submitted a request to MWRO through the Operations Formulation System designed for non-project, unfunded budgetary needs, which was forwarded to GSA in December 2003. In anticipation of the beginning of the rental period, the city completed several substantial repairs, including complete electrical rewiring, though the park completed minor maintenance projects using ONPS park funds. Sanders, also faced with \$45,000 in rent for the maintenance shop, sought emergency assistance from MWRO to secure the necessary funds by FY05.⁴³⁷ During the winter of 2004, however, the city realized that it could not charge rent for the building before conducting the repairs necessary to bring it up to code. Instead, Sanders and city officials negotiated a new five-year MOU for signature that spring that allowed NPS until May 2007 to obtain the \$60,000 necessary to lease the building through GSA. In the three years before the first rent was due, the city was to complete the necessary repairs, and NPS agreed to pay two-thirds of the building's utility costs. The city was, at that time, "strapped for funds," as Sanders noted, and if "the City's budget difficulties do not correct themselves through an improved economy, which will bring increased tax revenue, the time periods noted in the MOU will be extended."⁴³⁸ Eventually, the city replaced the roof of the building, bringing to an end a situation which

⁴³⁵ Museum Management Consultants, Inc. "Visitor Orientation Center, Independence, Missouri: Critical Issues," revised May 1, 2000; files of Harry S Truman NHS.

⁴³⁶ James Sanders, oral history interview, February 25, 2016.

⁴³⁷ Memorandum, Superintendent, Harry S Truman NHS to Don Smyth, MWRO, May 2, 2003; files of Harry S Truman NHS, A80 HSTR. See also email, James A. Sanders to Ernie Quintana, MWRO, January 26, 2004; files of Harry S Truman NHS.

⁴³⁸ Email, James A. Sanders to Ernie Quintana, March 4, 2004; files of Harry S Truman NHS, A44R.

had allowed water to drip down onto desks in the offices.⁴³⁹ In more recent years, NPS has performed collaborative rehabilitation projects with the City of Independence within the historic fire station, including replacing windows in the main office space overlooking Main Street. The city installed the windows and completed all exterior work, and the park's volunteer Woodcrafter Lewis McKarnin completed interior insulation, framing, and sill replacement. Park staff currently have no plans to completely vacate the building, though both interpretive and curatorial staff anticipate relocating to the George Wallace and Noland Homes, respectively, in the near future.

Community Engagement

Many of the interactions between NPS staff and the city involved politically charged issues or negotiations regarding potential impacts to the park. However, park staff had regular engagement with residents and city officials on more quotidian matters as well as on project-specific topics. Rehabilitation of the Frank and George Wallace Homes and the Noland Home, for example, required park and MWRO staff to coordinate closely with city planning and utilities officials to meet building codes, secure occupancy certificates, and connect water and sewer lines. Rehabilitation plans for the Noland Home, for example, called for the construction of a handicapped access ramp that required extensive consultation with the city Planning Department, while the presence of the Truman Home sewer outflow beneath the basements of the two Wallace Homes required close coordination with city officials. In 1993, the park requested assistance from the city for constructing a second handicapped curb to provide access to the Truman Home from the alley behind it, and to have the alley paved.⁴⁴⁰ NPS staff also occasionally had to remind city officials that the Truman Home and associated properties were exempt from local property taxes and landlord fees.

In a town in which historic preservation is an important political topic, NPS staff occupied a position of respect and authority by virtue of the Truman Home being one of the key components of the city's tourism appeal. Most superintendents have eschewed direct political engagement but have maintained a public presence in advocating for a role for historic preservation in the city's tourism promotion. Superintendent Reigle clearly sought to use the park's tourist appeal as a way to generate support for the new park from the city and the community, while his successor, Superintendent Ron Mack, was active as an ex-officio member of the city's Tourism Advisory Board throughout his term. Mack used his status on the Board to keep other members apprised of developments at the park including restoration and rehabilitation plans, new education and interpretive initiatives, and visitor services features. Mack also frequently commented on historic preservation issues, including the proposed demolition of the Missouri Pacific Depot,

⁴³⁹ James Sanders, oral history interview, February 25, 2016.

⁴⁴⁰ Ronald J. Mack to John Powell, City of Independence Engineering Division, September 13, 1993; files of Harry S Truman NHS, D50 HSTR.

also known as Truman Station, a historic building near the National Frontier Trails Center in Independence.⁴⁴¹

Mack, along with other park staff, was also involved in studies by the City of Independence and the Missouri Department of Transportation regarding re-routing commercial traffic from Truman Road. Park staff took part in a meeting in July 1992 which encouraged further review and studies in hopes of identifying “a feasible solution to the rerouting of traffic.”⁴⁴² The principal concern for NPS staff was the impact of continuing heavy truck traffic on the structural stability of the Truman Home’s foundation. Concerns over the home’s structural stability intensified by 1995, and the ongoing structural studies, described in Chapter 5, were taking vibrations from nearby truck traffic into consideration. City engineers and other officials, who were also responding to calls to reroute commercial trucks away from downtown on emissions and noise concerns, were clearly willing to work with NPS to study the additional impacts that commercial vehicles were having.⁴⁴³ Superintendent Apschnikat appreciated these concerns, and suggested to the city that, if external sources were found to be the cause of the home’s structural problems, NPS would consider further studies including seismographic testing.⁴⁴⁴ The structural engineering evaluations identified other causes for the foundation’s distress, but evidence of collaboration between NPS and the City of Independence is clear.

Park staff also proposed a major heritage tourism effort for the region, a Truman Scenic Byway that would connect the Independence and Grandview Units of the Harry S Truman NHS. James Williams conceived the project, which had support from the city governments of Kansas City, Grandview, Raytown, Lee’s Summit, and Independence, Jackson County, the Missouri Department of Transportation, and park staff. Williams drew upon the United States Federal Highway Administration’s Scenic Byway Program to create a driving tour to connect Independence, Kansas City, and Grandview marking the route that Truman traveled frequently between Grandview and Independence, with wayside exhibits to provide information about significant points along the way. Park staff and city and county officials hoped that grants through ENPMA and the Federal Highway Administration would allow the planning and development of the byway that would connect the geographically disparate units of the park through interpretive materials. While enthusiasm was initially high among the participants, Superintendent Larry Villalva announced at a second planning meeting that he would not commit the required NPS staff time. Planning for the project ended at that point.⁴⁴⁵

⁴⁴¹ Memorandum, Superintendent, Harry S Truman to Regional Director, MWRO, May 7, 1993; MWRO files, H32 HSTR.

⁴⁴² Ronald J. Mack to Robert Chappell, Missouri Highways and Transportation Department, July 29, 1992; files of Harry S Truman NHS, D30.

⁴⁴³ See, for example, Larry C. Kaufman, Director Parks Recreation and Community Services, City of Independence to Kenneth Apschnikat, March 31, 1995; files of Harry S Truman NHS, D52R.

⁴⁴⁴ Apschnikat to Kaufman, May 3, 1995; files of Harry S Truman NHS, D50.

⁴⁴⁵ James H. Williams, oral history interview, January 26, 2015.

Chapter 9: Cultural Resources Management

The home where Harry Truman and his wife, Bess, lived for much of their adult lives is justifiably the centerpiece of the Harry S Truman NHS. Located within a residential neighborhood near downtown Independence, it is the most visible and the most understandable component of the park. A vital, though often unheralded, part of Bess Wallace Truman's bequest to the United States, however, are the contents of the home. The Trumans "modernized" Mrs. Truman's family home shortly after they returned from Washington, D.C., in the mid-1950s but changed little about their house and how it was furnished and arranged in the decades afterward. Moreover, NPS acquired the home very soon after Mrs. Truman died in 1982, and it seems likely that few changes were made to it during that brief period. The contents, therefore, and their arrangement offer a largely intact view of the way that this former president and his wife lived their everyday lives. The completeness of the home and its contents when it came to NPS in late 1982 was highly unusual within the Service, with the Carl Sandburg Home NHS in North Carolina being the only equivalent site. As recounted in Chapters 3 and 5, the completeness of the home's interior, the sense that the Trumans had just stepped out, impressed all early NPS staff who saw it. The fact that the Trumans were notoriously protective of their private lives adds to the significance of the site as affording an otherwise inaccessible view into the world of Harry S Truman, 33rd president of the United States.

The nature of the contents of the Truman Home, however, posed enormous challenges along with the promises of interpretive richness. Given the disinclination of the Trumans to throw things away, storing items throughout the home, the full scope of the contents could only be guessed for the first several years. Planning for the home needed to begin immediately, however, and the new staff confronted the challenge of coming to grips with the substantial collection of artifacts while maintaining the value of the home's "just stepped out" feeling. Adding to the challenge was that collections management within NPS, particularly of the scope required for the Truman Home, was still in a developmental stage. The new cultural resources staff, led by Curator Steve Harrison, could draw upon only limited precedents in developing strategies for managing the Truman Home's artifacts.

Introduction: Collections Management Background in NPS

The establishment of the Harry S Truman NHS in early 1983 came after approximately fifteen years of rapid development in the practice of collections management within NPS. Historical items in park museums had been handled by the local park and with variable results from the 1930s, when NPS began operating historic sites, through the 1960s. NPS museums during that period were seen "principally as

interpretive media rather than as essential custodians of basic park resources.”⁴⁴⁶ Organizational changes within the Service in the 1960s under NPS Director George Hartzog and Director of Interpretation William Everhart led to the creation of Harpers Ferry Center. Originally designed to support and develop interpretive materials and exhibits using various types of media, by the mid-1970s, the Center housed a centralized program with still-growing expertise in the registration, storage, and management of historic artifacts.

Harpers Ferry Center staff took the lead in training curators and collections managers throughout NPS in the 1970s, leading to the publication of Ralph Lewis’ *Manual for Museums* in 1976. Staff from HFC then provided regular updates on specific curatorial topics in the years that followed, through the time when work at Harry S Truman NHS was beginning, through dissemination of “Conserve-a-Grams.” At the same time, HFC also developed the process for completing Collections Management Plans for individual parks, the first of which was prepared for Hubbell Trading Post National Historic Site, Arizona, in 1975. As Ralph Lewis noted in his history of NPS museum work, such plans became popular throughout NPS as parks sought to bring professional management and care to their collections of artifacts. Between 1975 and 1982, when the Truman Home was donated to the federal government, HFC prepared initial collections plans for thirty-two parks. One of the early curators in NPS, and the chronicler of the Service’s early management of historic furnishings and artifacts, explained that

By 1979 top management had become more fully aware that park museum collections constituted a scientific and cultural resource of impressive value for which it held prime responsibility. The directorate in Washington and the regional offices along with superintendents in the parks consequently increased attention to and support for the assessment, protection, and care of the specimens. This in turn made possible substantial improvement in the amount and quality of curatorial effort Service-wide.⁴⁴⁷

As a unit of the National Park System, Harry S Truman NHS staff took advantage of what was still a relatively new enthusiasm and sense of responsibility for museum collections within NPS.

Initial Collections Management Preparations

The curatorial staff at Harry S Truman NHS has had far less turnover than any other division. Only two Chief Curators have served at the park from 1984 to 2015, providing for an unusual degree of continuity in leadership. Given the unique nature of the artifact collection, both the condition in which it came to NPS and its extent, this consistent oversight has proved invaluable. The inaugural Curator, Steve Harrison,

⁴⁴⁶ Ralph H. Lewis, *Museum Curatorship in the National Park Service, 1904-1982* (Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Curatorial Services Division, 1993), 173.

⁴⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 202.

entered on duty in February 1984, and served until 1989 when Carol Dage was hired (Figure 35). Dage then remained Chief of Cultural Resources until 2015 when she was appointed Superintendent. As described in Chapter 3, Harrison's immediate task was to prepare the Truman Home for its public opening in May 1984. This work included developing security features to protect the many, small, personal items in the home close to the tour route and within reach of visitors, and creating unobtrusive means to discourage visitors from entering certain rooms while maintaining the sense of intimacy of a home from which the owners had just left. These protection measures, which Harrison had to improvise in the few months between his arrival and the public opening, constituted the first of two preliminary collections management steps at the Truman Home.

The second preliminary step Harrison faced was to develop policies and procedures for inventorying and cataloging the artifact collection. The Truman Home must have seemed overwhelming to the initial staff, though especially to Harrison, with its vast numbers of furniture and objects crammed into every room from basement to attic. As Harrison recalled later, "I probably spent two years a little bit like a chicken with my head cut off, because it was so overwhelming, and I didn't know where to start."⁴⁴⁸ The desire and requirement to exercise control and establish order over the objects within the home was ever-present. However, several factors slowed the process. First, NPS was, in the early 1980s, still developing its professional standards for curatorship and collections management. Harrison clearly had support from Regional Curator John Hunter and HFC staff, particularly Chief of Furnishings Branch Sarah Olson, but this support was distant and necessarily limited. Second, and related to it, NPS was only then developing a computerized database system for collections management. Personal computer hardware and software technology in 1984 and 1985 of the type that could be deployed within the Truman Home or other work or storage spaces was then in transition. While it held promise, as mentioned in Chapter 3, its success was uncertain, and the prospect of re-entering thousands of catalog records because of potentially changing hardware or software systems was daunting.

The third complicating factor facing Harrison as he sought to begin inventorying and cataloging the artifacts was the arrangement of the objects in the home. The point bears repeating that, when NPS took possession, the home was almost entirely intact as the Trumans had lived in it, with items ranging from large cabinet pieces and bedroom furniture to individual toothpicks and rubber bands still in the locations where Bess Truman left them (Figure 36). As Harrison quickly recognized, the significance of the artifact collection was not just in the objects themselves but also in their arrangement, their relationship to one another, to the home, and to the Trumans who chose to put them there.

Chapter 4 detailed the progress of the Historic Furnishings Report (HFR) which HFC's Sarah Olson began in late 1983 and completed in 1987. The HFR was primarily interpretive and historical in intent, containing information on the appropriate arrangement of furniture and other objects within each room based on extensive research

⁴⁴⁸ Steve Harrison, oral history interview, March 1, 2016.



Figure 35. Superintendent Carol Dage, 2015. Photo by the author.



Figure 36. Truman Home attic, c. 1983. Photo provided by Harry S Truman NHS.

into the objects themselves and how the Trumans lived in their various residences: their home in Independence and apartments in Washington, D.C., during Harry Truman's political career. However, the HFR was not designed to be a collections management document. Instead, Harrison, with the support of MWRO and HFC, began the development of a series of planning documents shortly after the rush of events surrounding the public opening in May 1984.

Planning Documents

Harrison quickly realized the importance of the specific location of the myriad artifacts in the Truman Home to the overall significance of the site. He, therefore, ensured that care was taken to document thoroughly the precise location of each item before it was moved for any purpose. This approach was at the core of his first planning document, the "Scope of Collections Statement." Harrison began work on the document in 1984, and it received final approval from MWRO in December 1985. By that point, park staff and MWRO had completed the *Statement for Management* and the *Interim Interpretive Prospectus*, both of which mentioned the importance of the artifact collections but without any further guidance regarding their significance or care. In underscoring the preliminary nature of the staff's knowledge of the artifacts in the home, Harrison asserted that

It is critical to recognize that the Site has a very unusual and atypical museum collection. It is unlike the collections in most furnished historic structures. The home was acquired so soon after the death of its last occupant, Mrs. Truman, that, in many cases, the arrangement and placement of objects remains an accurate reflection of the Trumans' life at 219 North Delaware. The NPS has a unique opportunity to preserve the home and its contents for public tours. . . . The research value of the collection as a whole is great and undoubtedly will increase with time. . . . it is as a reflection of the private life of a first family that the collection's value becomes apparent. The completely furnished home conveys a feeling of the Trumans which researchers and the public can get nowhere else. Hence all the objects in the house, their condition, location, and arrangement must be considered, for each and every one of them reveals a little bit more of the Truman story.⁴⁴⁹

Following this general statement of principles, the "Scope of Collections Statement" proceeded to outline its purposes regarding protection and interpretation, policies and procedures that should govern acquisition of additional artifacts, repair and restoration of artifacts, uses of the artifact collections, including different types of research, the loan of artifacts, and relations with the Truman Library and the Jackson County Historical Society. The document also contained a provision that the park should review the "Scope of Collections Statement" on an annual basis, making adjustments as

⁴⁴⁹ Steve Harrison, "Scope of Collections Statement" (1985), 2; files of Harry S Truman NHS, D6215.

both policies and the collections changed.⁴⁵⁰ Finally, the “Scope of Collections Statement” called for the development of a Collections Management Plan (CMP), which, at that point, was scheduled for FY89.

Work on the Collections Management Plan was delayed until early 1995 when MWRO contracted with Wendy Claire Jessup to perform the work. Jessup conducted a site visit in February 1995, accompanied by Great Plains System Support Center Curator Carolyn Wallingford. Jessup, working in coordination with Wallingford and park staff, including Curator Carol Dage and Museum Technician R. Scott Stone, evaluated management of the collections in six categories: records, security, environment, storage, exhibits, and maintenance and housekeeping. The CMP was developed after the Wallace Homes, Noland Home, and the Truman Farm had been added to the park but did not consider these resources and focused solely on the collections in the Truman Home and in the offsite storage facility, which will be discussed later in this chapter. For each category, the CMP provided a view of current practices and policies and made recommendations for future management.

In general, the Collections Management Plan found that the museum records were being handled adequately. This included the accessioning and cataloging procedures and records, storage media, photographic documentation, and object marking. While most of the records were being stored adequately and protected from deterioration, some of the archival documents required new protection, including the use of archival stock for folders and inserted notes. Security at the Truman Home had recently been assessed, and the home was found to be generally secure. The CMP, however, pointed out that the home continued to suffer from water infiltration and also was not as well protected from fire as it should be; the CMP recommended installation of an automatic fire suppression system, which was accomplished in 2010. Environmental conditions of the home, the CMP noted, were a challenge, given the widely fluctuating exterior temperatures and frequently high environmental humidity during the summer months. Detailed humidity studies conducted by park staff using data loggers in the several years before the CMP, however, revealed that humidity inside the home frequently was far below acceptable levels, ranging from eighteen to thirty percent except in the attic and second floor storeroom, where humidity levels were frequently too high. In the offsite storage facility, the CMP found, temperature and humidity were more stable and appropriate for collections storage. However, the survey identified that an installed electrostatic precipitator, designed to reduce particulates in the air, might be releasing excessive levels of ozone which could damage several of the objects, particularly textiles. In addition, it found that diesel exhaust from nearby trucks was penetrating the collections storage area, creating a fine greasy black film on exposed surfaces. The CMP explained that, although the levels of exhaust were below the permissible exposure limit (PEL) for humans, “it should be noted that there is no PEL for museum objects and it is likely that the museum objects stored in the [offsite storage facility]—especially those which are not stored

⁴⁵⁰ The “Scope of Collections Statement” was revised in October 1992 to include sections required under the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act, and in January 1996 to include references to the Wallace Homes, Noland Home, and Truman Farm Home. Park staff annually review the “Scope of Collections Statement.”

inside of closed cabinets—are being subjected to chemical and physical damage caused by these materials.” Corrections were made to the systems to ensure compromises were not occurring. Finally, light intensity in the Truman Home coming in from the windows was found to be too great, despite the presence of ultra-violet filters, and new filters were recommended. All other maintenance and exhibit functions were identified as acceptable, and the CMP concluded that the curatorial program was being managed well.⁴⁵¹

The only portion of the CMP prepared largely by park staff was that which treated the process of acquisition and disposal of items. Jessup and Wallingford, during their site visit, recommended that the park’s collections be reviewed for culling and disposal, particularly for such common items as cleaning supplies, empty product boxes, and household goods. Park staff, with the approval of the CMP team, substantially rewrote this section based on their understanding of the unique nature of the Truman Home’s collection. Many of these common items remained in their original locations in the home, though other objects susceptible to damage were relocated to the offsite storage facility after their original locations were thoroughly documented. Recalling the intactness of the collection, the acquisition and disposal section of the CMP asserts that “The integrity of the collection and the value of the collection is the combination of the objects and information which material culture historians and research can use in future study of the family and site.” While some items too deteriorated or potentially hazardous to the staff or to other items in the collection were disposed in accordance with standard museum practices, the preferential option was to retain items if at all possible. “In the future,” the section concludes, “evaluation of the collections for long term curation may be necessary due to increased storage needs, however, at present storage space is not an issue.”⁴⁵²

Truman Family Items and the Truman Library

One of the complicating factors as NPS began planning for management of the Truman Home collection was the set of items that had been removed from the home and brought to the Truman Library prior to NPS taking responsibility for it. In his will, Harry Truman donated his personal papers to the Library. This gave Library staff clear authority during the 1970s to remove all Truman-related manuscripts, letters, and other papers from the home to the Library and established a precedent for their subsequent activity regarding items in the home. Truman Library staff had accessed the Truman Home before Mrs. Truman died while conducting an inventory of the home at Margaret Truman Daniel’s request and, again, after Mrs. Truman died and before NPS began administering the site. In response to requests from Mrs. Daniel, staff from the Truman Library removed a number of items from the home before NPS took possession and, again, in May 1983, delivering much of it to her in New York City and retaining other items in the Truman Library. In June 1983, Truman Library Director Benedict Zobrist provided Ranger-in-Charge Tom Richter with a set of photographs of the items that were removed

⁴⁵¹ Wendy Claire Jessup, *Collections Management Plan for Harry S Truman National Historic Site* (February 7, 1996); files of Harry S Truman NHS, H20

⁴⁵² *Ibid.*, 12-13.

the previous month.⁴⁵³ Former Museum Aide Lisa Bosso Houston recalled viewing the items in the Truman Library that had come from the Truman Home, including a large collection of clothing from Mrs. Truman's dressing room on the second floor and attic: "I could just see all these clothes in there [the Truman Home]. It would be really neat if we could have seen it that way. And all of Margaret [Truman Daniel]'s things. I mean, there was just tons of stuff that was removed from the house, trunks just full of stuff."⁴⁵⁴

Mrs. Daniel remained actively involved with the Truman Home for the first several years after NPS took possession, including playing an important role in determining the initial route of the tour through the home. As described in Chapter 4 also, the status of her ownership of many items in the Truman Home remained unclear, an issue which delayed the completion of the Historic Furnishings Report until 1986. She regularly communicated with Superintendent Reigle, who worked to maintain good relations with her, regarding items of furnishings in particular. Mrs. Daniel was consulted when furniture and other artifacts were sent out for conservation to prepare for the public opening, including a portrait of her sent to the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art in Kansas City, Missouri, for cleaning and stretching. While many communications with her were cordial, she took Reigle to task in June 1985 regarding several carpets which she claimed had been relocated inappropriately: "All of those carpets belong to me. As you are not using them the way they were left, I want it clearly understood that I own them. I will lend them to you for the time being, but that small carpet in the bedroom was never there in my Mother's lifetime and certainly was not brought down with the furniture. I wish we could get things straight." She also asked that one of the carpets in the bedroom be returned to her.⁴⁵⁵ Reigle wrote quickly to explain the reason for relocating the carpets, which was to avoid wear from people visiting the home, and sent the small carpet as she requested. As Reigle recalled,

you have to choose what your battles were going to be with Margaret. And I tried to select the causes appropriately. There were times when Margaret wanted a couple little things out of the house, and several of the staff members thought this was the worst thing in the world, that I was giving up my sacred trust to protect these objects by letting Margaret have a couple little things in the house. And I felt it was silly to go the other way sometimes when she wanted a throw rug that we weren't using, and to fight her over that throw rug when you know that clearly the most important interpretive objects in the home are clearly hers. The piano is clearly hers—we tell everybody that comes through the house—and the portrait of her as you walk in the front door or you leave is clearly hers. And I thought it would be silly to fight over a two-by-three throw rug with the piano and portraits and other things like that at stake.⁴⁵⁶

⁴⁵³ Benedict Zobrist to Tom Richter, June 23 1983; files of Harry S Truman NHS, D6223.

⁴⁵⁴ Lisa Bosso Houston, oral history interview, August 31, 1990.

⁴⁵⁵ Margaret Truman Daniel to Norm Reigle, June 20, 1985; Reigle to Daniel, June 28, 1985; files of Harry S Truman NHS, D6223.

⁴⁵⁶ Norm Reigle, oral history interview, November 20, 1989.

While being willing to work cooperatively with Mrs. Daniel, Reigle understood the need to define clear boundaries regarding ownership of items in the home. In 1985, Reigle coordinated with MWRO staff to draft an agreement document between NPS and Margaret Truman Daniel regarding this ownership. The document, he noted, was based on a similar agreement between the heirs of President Dwight Eisenhower, whose home also was a historic site. Reigle was clear in stating the importance of this issue in a confidential memorandum to the MWRO Regional Director: “Resolution of object ownership is one of the highest and most important issues facing the Harry S Truman National Historic Site at present and will continue to impact the park unless resolved once and for all. Without such an agreement the cataloging, accountability [sic], curatorial [sic] care and long term storage as well as the furnishing plan remain in limbo and we will be on constant uncertainty regarding what we have and what we don’t have.” Reigle also noted that Mrs. Daniel had made claims regarding items on the second floor of the home, and “She has recently made a statement to Dr. Zobrist that we (her and I) have an agreement that anything we do not display she can have. Of course the real historic value of the collection is the completeness.”⁴⁵⁷ Reigle continued to revise the draft agreement in 1986, in consultation with the Regional Director and Regional Curator.⁴⁵⁸

Cataloging the Collection

Park staff faced an immediate need to begin cataloging the artifact collection. Reigle, in coordination with Regional Curator John Hunter, arranged for Susan Kopczynski, Curator at Morristown NHS, New Jersey, to begin cataloging items in the home in November 1983. Kopczynski had cataloged a substantial portion of the items on the first floor by February 1984 when Steve Harrison entered on duty, at which point Kopczynski returned to Morristown. Once Harrison began work at the Truman Home, he quickly developed an understanding of the cataloging project that he described as archeological:

part of the sensitivity of the house—part of my sensitivity, what we needed to do at the house, anyway, was. . . a little like an archeological site, where the relationships of things, the layers of things—you’ve got to track that, you know. You have to. And I felt in Truman Home that we had to do that. We had to document the relationships of things. . . some of this is going to go away. It’s going to get moved somewhere to be properly stored. And you lose—you lose that relationship if you haven’t documented it.⁴⁵⁹

⁴⁵⁷ Memorandum, Superintendent, Harry S Truman to Regional Director, MWRO, June 14, 1985; files of Harry S Truman NHS, D6223.

⁴⁵⁸ Memorandum, Regional Director, MWRO to Superintendent, Harry S Truman, January 17, 1986; files of Harry S Truman NHS, H20. An executed agreement document was not identified during the course of the present research.

⁴⁵⁹ Steve Harrison, oral history interview, March 16, 2016.

Harrison visited and drew upon the experience of the Carl Sandburg Home NHS, North Carolina, which had also come under NPS administration with a fully furnished home of original artifacts, to develop his approach to cataloging the Truman Home.

Harrison implemented his approach in the early cataloging efforts. According to the NPS *Museum Handbook*, cataloging “is the process of recording detailed information about individual items or groups of related items. Cataloging also includes assigning a unique identifying number to the item or group of items.” Each park “must have museum catalog records for all objects, specimens, and archival/manuscript collections.”⁴⁶⁰ It is a painstaking, detailed process in any setting, made more complicated by the complexity of the furnishings in the Truman Home and the interpretive plan to maintain it in its lived-in state. In his initial *Plan for Completely Cataloging and Storing the Museum Collection at Harry S Truman National Historic Site* (hereafter referred to as *Plan for Cataloging*), completed in November 1986, Harrison stated that

The integrity of the collection in situ must be taken into account in all collection related activities. It would be much simpler if we were dealing with a more typical museum collection which has been collected from a variety of sources and is already in a museum storage facility. The Truman Home, full of 120 years of accumulation by four generations of occupants, is more like an archaeological site. Immediate provenance and the spatial relationship of objects must be taken into account and accurately recorded and documented when doing initial cataloging.

Adding to the complexity, Harrison, noted, is the “natural day-to-day arrangement” of the collection “which was the result of human activity. The objects are mixed, not neatly separated according to material or function.”⁴⁶¹

By the time that Harrison completed his *Plan for Cataloging* in late 1986, park staff had already begun the process of cataloging the collection. Objects seen from the tour route on the first floor, he explained, had assigned registration numbers (one component of the complete cataloging process), “as these objects are the most vulnerable to theft,” along with objects in the basement and carriage house “where contract or administrative use would threaten the objects,” and removal to storage was necessary.⁴⁶² Draft handwritten catalog records were prepared for approximately 1,500 objects in 1984, a process which continued through 1985 and 1986, when 3,604 objects had been cataloged.⁴⁶³ Completely cataloging individual items was extraordinarily time-consuming, though, which left park staff without even the most basic information about many thousands of items in the home for many years to come. In his 1986 *Plan for Cataloging*, therefore, Harrison laid out a five-year plan “for accountability, museum records, and collection documentation.” In this plan, he recommended postponing

⁴⁶⁰ National Park Service, *Museum Handbook*, Part II (2000), 3:1.

⁴⁶¹ Steve Harrison, *A Plan for Completely Cataloging and Storing the Museum Collection at Harry S Truman National Historic Site* (November 1986), 1.

⁴⁶² *Ibid.*, 2.

⁴⁶³ Annual Superintendent’s Reports, 1984, 1985, 1986.

registration and cataloging, except in selective cases, focusing instead on developing an inventory of the collection which would “quickly achieve the basic accountability required by the IG’s [Inspector General] office and needed by cultural resources management. This inventory,” he continued, “will be the basis for future registration and cataloging.” During the inventory process staff would assign a catalog number to the object, record the object’s location, photograph the object in place, and then place the object back in the same location. Once that basic inventory was complete, Harrison stated, “we will have achieved basic accountability and will have the freedom to move objects without loss of historic data.”⁴⁶⁴

To further this plan, in 1987, Harrison prepared a brief statement of guidelines for conducting an inventory of the Truman Home. By this time, an inventory of the basement had been completed, and work was beginning on the second floor; he expected work to be completed by the following winter. In his guidelines, Harrison emphasized the requirement for careful documentation of the location of each object. In particular, Harrison developed a sequence within each room or space, starting with window covers, then objects hanging on walls, then the furniture, and, lastly, objects on or within furniture or on floors. For each room, Harrison called for objects to be inventoried in a specific order: from left to right, and top to bottom. For piles of objects, he designed the process to begin at the bottom of the pile and work upward “so that we can use the reference word ‘on.’ (i.e. for perfume bottles on a doily on a dresser, catalog dresser, then doily, then perfume bottles.” Within specific collections of items, Harrison specified using cardinal directions—north, south, east, west—rather than left and right.⁴⁶⁵

With the inventorying under way in late 1986 and through 1987, and despite the suggestion in *Plan for Cataloging* in favor of postponement, some cataloging continued. The steps Harrison outlined consisted of inventory, which included assigning catalog numbers, affixing the catalog number to the object with a tag or lacquer, and completing a catalog record worksheet; registration, using the proper object name and classification using Robert G. Chenhall’s classic *Nomenclature for Museum Cataloging*; and, finally, entering the inventory and registration data into a computer database.⁴⁶⁶ This final step was a major development, and was still in process of implementation when Harrison prepared his *Plan for Cataloging*. Initial cataloging was all conducted using handwritten cards, and initial forays into computerized databases were done cautiously, with good reason. The mid-1980s was a period of experimentation in what were then called microcomputers, later known as desktop computers, but while many glitches remained in both hardware and software, the direction of greater efficiency through using computers was clear.

Harrison, assisted by Museum Technician Lisa Bosso, who entered on duty in February 1984, began planning, by 1985, for the use of computer database software in collections management. In early 1985, the park acquired a “portable computer” from the

⁴⁶⁴ Harrison, Cataloging Plan, 4.

⁴⁶⁵ Steve Harrison, *Guidelines for Conducting Inventory of Contents of Truman Home*, January 1987; files of Harry S Truman NHS.

⁴⁶⁶ Steve Harrison, Cataloging Plan, 6.



Figure 37. Intern Jackie Holt entering catalog data on computer, 1985. Photo provided by Harry S Truman NHS.

Southeast Regional Office, and Harrison and Bosso began to enter catalog data (Figure 37).⁴⁶⁷ While an NPS committee, of which Harrison was a member, was working on a service-wide cataloging program, Harrison and Bosso developed detailed plans for using the software database management program, dBase III, to record catalog data for the Truman Home. The combination of a lack of what is now called user interface in the software and the complexity of the locational data needed for the objects in the home meant that the instructions required painstaking planning. Harrison and Bosso translated the instructions for identifying the specifics of an object's location in relation to other objects in the room and immediate space into standardized entries in the database, including the order of descriptors, allowable descriptors, and the use of punctuation. Other information to be included in the database was an artifact's status as a controlled property (either valued at more than one hundred dollars or susceptible to theft) to be inventoried annually, the catalog number, the locational status of the object (on exhibit, on loan, missing, or in storage) and the status year (using the four-digit year), the catalog number, the acquisition type and date, the accession number, the object name (using Chenhall's *Nomenclature*), and much more. As Harrison noted in conveying the instructions to Superintendent Reigle, he was aware that the Washington Office was then

⁴⁶⁷ Annual Superintendent's Report for 1985; files of Harry S Truman NHS.

working on their own computer program for cataloging, and suggested, “It sounds as if it will be an expanded version of what we are doing.”⁴⁶⁸

NPS released a test version of its collection management software program in 1986, the Automated National Catalog System (ANCS). The new program, released after testing as Version 3.30, was designed to work as a stand-alone program without dBase III. As with Harrison’s and Bosso’s instructions from the year before, the instructions for data entry for this system were painstakingly detailed, particularly regarding implementing the Disk Operating System (DOS) commands. The installation guide, moreover, included multiple responses for anticipated glitches, including error messages, deleted files, and more. Harrison then worked to implement ANCS for the Truman Home’s cataloging program, coordinating with Regional Staff Curator John Hunter to provide detailed comments and suggestions for the software in 1987.⁴⁶⁹ In early 1988, Harrison was one of three NPS collections managers, along with Linda Towle (Manager, Archeological Collections Management Project, North Atlantic Region) and Ted Fremd (Museum Specialist-Paleontologist, John Day Fossil Beds National Monument), whom NPS Museum Registrar Joan Bacharach requested to test ANCS. The three were asked to “really run it through its paces, try to see how it performs under a range of circumstances, and also try to ‘bomb’ it...that is, if it has any weaknesses or problems, let’s try to find them before we release it Servicewide!” Harrison and the others reviewed the software later that month, and NPS released ANCS Version 3.30 in late March 1988.⁴⁷⁰ Harrison was then serving on the National Catalog Steering Committee (NCSC), an NPS committee established in 1982 “to advise the Chief Curator on ways to address the specific needs of the National Park Service museum collections within the context of NPS information management systems.” This committee had shepherded the development of ANCS and, in 1988, began work on “the future development of ANCS, networking and multi-user capabilities, and the aggregation of regional and servicewide data.” Harrison was one of twelve NPS personnel serving on this forward-looking committee.⁴⁷¹

The park received occasional updates to ANCS software, such as in 1990 when the History Conversion Program was distributed to convert the history classification codes in accordance with revisions to *Nomenclature*.⁴⁷² In 1996 and 1997, the park took part in a pilot program for an updated version of the collections management software program Re:discovery, then being developed for archeological collections. In 1998,

⁴⁶⁸ *Instructions for Computerized Cataloging at Harry S Truman National Historic Site*, attached to Memorandum, Museum Curator, Harry S Truman NHS to Superintendent, Harry S Truman NHS, October 31, 1985; files of Harry S Truman NHS, H18.

⁴⁶⁹ The Automated National Catalog System (ANCS) Package Version 3.30, Installation Guide (Version 3.30); files of Harry S Truman NHS. See also Memorandum, Acting Superintendent, Harry S Truman [Steven Harrison] to Regional Director, MWRO, October 15, 1987; files of Harry S Truman NHS, H20.

⁴⁷⁰ Joan Bacharach, NPS to Linda Towle, Ted Fremd, Steve Harrison, February 11, 1988; files of Harry S Truman NHS. See also Memorandum, Associate Director, Cultural Resources, WASO to Field Directorate, March 31, 1988; files of Harry S Truman NHS, H18.

⁴⁷¹ Memorandum, Associate Director, Cultural Resources, WASO to Regional Director, MWRO, July 19, 1988; files of Harry S Truman NHS H18.

⁴⁷² Memorandum, Associate Director, Cultural Resources, WASO to Field Directorate, May 11, 1990; files of Harry S Truman NHS, H18.

however, NPS released an updated version of ANCS that was optimized for the Windows environment. Known as ANCS+ and later ICMS (Interior Collection Management System) when the Department of the Interior standardized its use across all DOI bureaus, it has remained in use at Harry S Truman NHS.

With the new computer database system up and running by the late 1980s, the pace of cataloging increased. Because of the time-consuming nature of the process, however, due to the amount of information required, the nature of the artifacts in the Truman Home, and frequent additions to the collection from the new properties added to the park and when original architectural items were replaced, cataloging has continued to the present time. Early annual Superintendent's Reports regularly noted the numbers of objects cataloged during that year: over 6,000 in 1987, 3,000 in 1992, 3,157 in 1997, when the total number of cataloged artifacts first passed 50,000. The limiting factor for cataloging, given the labor-intensive nature of the work, was adequate staffing. As noted earlier in this chapter, the park has benefited from having two Curators who served for extended terms: Steve Harrison from 1984 until 1989 and Carol Dage from 1989 to 2015. These long-serving Curators provided a great deal of continuity and have conducted much of the cataloging in addition to other duties. Museum Curator Kristen Stalling was appointed to the Chief, Cultural Resources, position in June 2016. The time that it takes to prepare full catalog records for so many artifacts, now numbering over 54,000, requires additional staff. After Harrison entered on duty in February 1984, he hired a Museum Aide, Lisa Bosso, who entered on duty in March of that year and remained for more than three years. Even with her assistance, however, Harrison required the assistance of several seasonal and guide staff to carry out cataloging efforts, with mixed results. As a Museum Aide, for example, Bosso had no supervisory authority, which, she felt, occasionally caused problems: "that is what it should have been, you know, Steve [Harrison] up there pushing papers, and then another person who could supervise. If they were going to have temporary people come in and work for three-month stretches or a summer stretch or whatever, that's what they needed."⁴⁷³

The addition of the Noland and Wallace Homes in 1990 and 1991 and the Truman Farm in late 1993 added new curatorial responsibilities without adding any new staff members. In 1993, according to the Annual Superintendent's Report, the park's Curatorial Division was short by one staff member "needed to accomplish timely accountability for museum collections," both cataloging and housekeeping. The addition of the new properties "has boosted our uncataloged collections and requires an even greater demand on staff."⁴⁷⁴ The park continued to use seasonal staff and interns in addition to permanent staff, including Museum Aides and Museum Technicians, to perform the cataloging and housekeeping responsibilities. The current Curator, Kristen Stalling, entered on duty in July 1999 as Museum Aide, promoted the following year to Museum Technician. At the same time, the park's museum staff was frequently called to assist other NPS units throughout the region for specific projects, including inaugurating a collections management program and responding to emergency situations. Finally, Chief of Cultural Resources Carol Dage was promoted to Assistant Regional Curator for

⁴⁷³ Lisa Bosso Houston, oral history interview, August 31, 1990.

⁴⁷⁴ Annual Superintendent's Report for 1993; files of Harry S Truman NHS.

the Midwest Regional Office in 2002 and served part-time in that function beginning in early 2003 in addition to her park responsibilities, holding both appointments until 2015.

Collections Storage

Cataloging objects in the Truman Home was one of the most crucial requirements for the park's new curatorial staff after the home was opened to the public. As soon as cataloging began, however, another crucial need was identified: storage. While the value of the home for interpretive purposes was the intact nature of furnishings and objects in the locations where the Trumans had placed them, many items needed to be removed, either on a temporary or a permanent basis, in order to protect them or to provide working space in the home. The need for additional storage space was realized very quickly as Harrison and Bosso began assessing the artifacts and cataloging. Park staff, in collaboration with staff from DSC and MWRO, began work on the General Management Plan (GMP) in the spring of 1984, prior to the public opening, and although initial focus was on expanding the geographic scope of the NHS boundary, recommendations for additional collection storage space were added to the proposed alternatives by the fall of 1984. Comments on early drafts of the GMP frequently were negative for exceeding the legislated mandates of the park, but several commenters included the collections storage proposal in their negative responses as well. In November 1984, for example, Park Planner Jim Douglas argued that "the draft GMP forsees [sic] the need to have physical space and specific facilities for the curation of 'thousands' of objects from the home. Again, it is the home itself, not these thousands of Truman artifacts which are to be preserved and interpreted. If there are materials in excess of what reasonably be used for interpretive purposes in the home, then they should be disposed of property rather than kept (at considerable cost)." The Special Assistant for Policy Development in the Washington, D.C., office likewise asked "Why are we responsible for curating 'thousands of objects which cannot be stored in the Truman home'?"⁴⁷⁵ Such strident comments likely drew from a combination of the mood of federal fiscal conservatism in the mid-1980s, critical of governmental overreach, and a lack of experience within NPS regarding the Service's responsibilities for museum collections as described earlier in this chapter.

Support for an off-site curatorial facility grew within MWRO throughout 1985 and 1986, as witnessed by subsequent GMP drafts that made it a central feature. The park's initial *Resource Management Plan*, being prepared in 1985, identified collection space as a critical need in order to provide safe storage for objects that had already been removed from the home. These objects, the RMP noted, "are being temporarily stored in a relatively secure room at the Harry S. Truman Library. . . . This manner of storage does not comply with standards set forth in NPS Museum Handbook, Manual for Museums,

⁴⁷⁵ Memorandum, Jim Douglas, PPA to John Haubert, NPS, November 20, 1984; Special Assistant for Policy Development, WASO to Chief, Division of Park Planning and Special Studies, WASO; files of Harry S Truman NHS, A56.

and NPS-28.” (Figure 38) The “Scope of Collections Statement,” which Harrison prepared in late 1985, likewise noted that “Some objects not visible to the public have been removed from the home because of preservation activities such as the installation of environmental control system [sic] in the basement and the stabilization of the carriage house.”⁴⁷⁶ The environmental conditions in the Truman Home, Harrison explained, were clearly inadequate for proper museum storage designed to protect the wide range of artifacts in the park’s care. As he recalled later, “we really did need to get stuff out of the house. It just—you can’t provide the right kind of environment, you can’t protect it from all the light, you can’t protect it from insects. . . .and it’s a load on the house structurally, too.”⁴⁷⁷

Harrison explained also that working space was a factor in requesting additional curatorial space. Referring to a storage space in the Truman Home above the kitchen, he recalled that “you couldn’t hardly even move through the room! It was just a junk room for them. They just piled stuff in there. And there was—there was a lot of stuff. And, even in there, we wanted to kind of keep track of that—of the layers and the piles. But there wasn’t much room to work. So, there was a—there was a limit to what we could do there on site.” Former Museum Aide Lisa Bosso Houston also recalled using the basement of the Truman Home for cataloging work (Figure 39): “That was always fun, sitting downstairs wrapped up in blankets. That first winter, it was so cold in the basement—I mean, you could see your breath. I would sit down there and catalog with my gloves on. I’d have my white gloves on, and I would catalog. I mean, I was cataloging with that and my parka on.”⁴⁷⁸ As part of the overall planning process, Harrison requested the assistance of HFC Museum Specialist Donald Cumberland, who had experience with museum collection storage plans. “I had Donald come and look at the collection,” Harrison recalled, “go through the house, look at everything, try, then, to kind of figure out how many—what kinds of storage do we need? What kinds of equipment? What kinds of shelving? What sizes? . . .How many to properly store all this stuff?” Cumberland then assisted Harrison with identifying cubic footage required along with necessary supplies.⁴⁷⁹

In a meeting with National Archives staff in Kansas City, Harrison heard of a storage facility then being developed in the area that sounded suitable. With this facility in mind, Harrison worked with Superintendent Reigle to prepare specifications for the new collections facility that the General Services Administration (GSA) would require in order to provide the requested facility. The requirements included being as close as possible to the Truman Home to minimize risk from vehicle accidents, vibration, etc.; paved surfaces; twenty-four hour access; not in a flood plain; complete and secure control of access to the space; minimal or no windows; minimal threat of fire; complete heating and air conditioning control with particulate air filtration; a double-wide overhead door;

⁴⁷⁶ Steven Harrison, “Harry S Truman National Historic Site Scope of Collection Statement” (1985), 12; *Resource Management Plan, Harry S Truman National Historic Site* (1986 draft).

⁴⁷⁷ Steve Harrison, oral history interview, March 1, 2016.

⁴⁷⁸ Lisa Bosso Houston, oral history interview, August 31, 1990.

⁴⁷⁹ *Ibid.* See also Cumberland’s Trip Report, September 22-24, 1986 detailing his recommendations, attached to Norman Reigle, Harry S Truman NHS to Jean Svadlenak, Kansas City Museum, January 5, 1989; files of Harry S Truman NHS, A38.



Figure 38. Storage room in Truman Library, 1988. Photo provided by Harry S Truman NHS.



Figure 39. Harry S Truman staff member Cindy Draney cataloging items in the Truman Home basement, 1985. Photo provided by Harry S Truman NHS.

and fire and intrusion alarm systems. In addition, Harrison requested 4,600 feet of museum storage facility space, together with 500 square feet for a laboratory, 300 square feet for collection accountability, and 200 square feet for a research room, for a total of 5,600 square feet.⁴⁸⁰ Superintendent Reigle detailed the plan in a request to MWRO Regional Director in May 1987, explaining that the park was then using temporary storage space at the Truman Library but that Library staff had plans to convert the space to an exhibit area, making relocation of the temporarily-stored artifacts time sensitive. Funding for the first year, Reigle noted, would be provided by the park, but the rental costs thereafter would be provided from a pool in the Washington Office of NPS. Reigle planned to pay for the initial year from a combination of Operations of the National Park Service (ONPS) funds, cataloging funds, and fee enhancement funds, the latter of which, he conceded, might or might not be available; “If we were to divert an anticipated \$25,000 of WASO cataloging dollars” to cover the lack of fee enhancement funds, Reigle explained, “we would still be short and would have to defer cataloging for a year. In essence we would have the museum but could not work in it.”⁴⁸¹

Reigle successfully identified the necessary funds, and, in November 1987, GSA located 5,800 square feet in the offsite facility Harrison had located and entered into a lease agreement to take effect in February 1988.⁴⁸² The park took occupancy on February 12, 1988, and immediately arranged for security services through GSA’s Law Enforcement Branch.⁴⁸³ Park staff began preparing this offsite collections storage facility for use in 1988, and have used it as storage and workspace since. Harrison quickly began the process of removing the many items from the Truman Home that had been stored in the Truman Library. A week after taking occupancy of the storage facility, Superintendent Reigle and Truman Library Director Benedict Zobrist exchanged light-hearted correspondence regarding the “rental” costs due to the Truman Library for the storage space, with reference to the on-going debate regarding the use of a period after Harry Truman’s middle initial. Reigle provided a summary of the accounting to Zobrist:

Due to our heartfelt appreciation of your invaluable assistance, we have arranged for payment. Enclosed is a \$10,000 note (which is the smallest we have), and at the current exchange rate equates to \$17,050. Our over-whelming sense of obligation to you has led to a decision which comes only with sadness and regret. We are transferring ownership of and responsibility for the 1972 Truman Chrysler to the Harry S. Truman Library. It’s value (see attached appraisal) is \$25,000. Since I am not as benevolent as you I must balance my mental anguish against

⁴⁸⁰ Space Specifications Form R6-660 (ND, c. 1986); files of Harry S Truman NHS. See also Harrison, “A Plan for Completely Cataloging and Storing the Museum Collection” (November 1986), 15-16, where the necessary supplies are also outlined.

⁴⁸¹ Memorandum, Superintendent, Harry S Truman to Regional Director, MWRO, May 1, 1987; files of Harry S Truman NHS, A80.

⁴⁸² U.S. Government Lease for Real Property, November 1987; files of Harry S Truman NHS.

⁴⁸³ Norman Reigle, Harry S Truman to Cheryl Brace, Law Enforcement Branch, February 26, 1988; files of Harry S Truman NHS, A80.

your account. My bill will be \$6.98—the cost of two six packs for being chastised by a certain prominent figure over the lack of a certain item of punctuation.⁴⁸⁴

Reigle was adamant about not informing Margaret Truman Daniel about the offsite collection facility. As described earlier in this chapter, Reigle had worked closely with Mrs. Daniel to allow her to have some of the artifacts in the home that she requested. As he stated in 1990, “She doesn’t even know we have the [offsite storage facility]. I mean I haven’t even told her we’ve got the [offsite storage facility] down there. For a couple of reasons. I don’t want her to go near the [offsite storage facility]. If she went near the [offsite storage facility] and saw that junk we’re saving, she’d go through there like a cyclone and throw that stuff out. She’d throw out every piece of junk we got in there.”⁴⁸⁵ The facility has maintained its original design and currently includes a loading dock, a small studio space for photographing artifacts, a processing room, a laboratory, and an extensive storage space with a mix of shelving, flat document storage, and museum cabinets.

HFC Museum Specialist Donald Cumberland returned to Independence in August 1988 to assist Harrison with setting up the new space. Cumberland observed in his trip report that “The facility is unique in the National Park Service and possibly in the museum community” given its location, and the “park’s novel approach to collection storage has proven very successful. The facility provides the collection with security, fire protection, and a beneficial environment.” Cumberland had few comments to make, primarily minor recommendations for arrangement of storage facilities, though he noted that “The facility’s electrostatic precipitator air-purifier probably is the type that produces ozone—a powerful oxidizing agent and a threat to the museum objects.”⁴⁸⁶ The 1996 Collections Management Plan, discussed earlier in this chapter, verified this as a recurring problem. The Department of Health and Human Services conducted an air quality study of the offsite collection facility in November 1999, however, upon request of park staff to evaluate the impact of diesel exhaust from nearby trucks and ozone from the electrostatic precipitator on the collections. The study found no elemental carbon (from diesel exhaust), nitrogen dioxide, or ozone in the facility. However, because park staff had identified dust and particulate in the cataloging room; the study recommended higher efficiency filters within the facility’s HVAC system.⁴⁸⁷ In response, the facility’s landlord arranged for installation of supplemental pre-filters.

⁴⁸⁴ Norman Reigle to Benedict Zobrist, February 19, 1988; files of Harry S Truman NHS, H20. Clearly, Reigle’s reference to conveying the Trumans’ automobile to the Truman Library was a tongue-in-cheek statement.

⁴⁸⁵ Norman Reigle, oral history interview, November 20, 1989.

⁴⁸⁶ Donald R. Cumberland, Trip Report: Harry S Truman National Historic Site, August 8-11, 1986, attached to Memorandum, Associate Director, Cultural Resources, WASO to Regional Director, MWRO, October 13, 1988; files of Harry S Truman NHS, H18. Cumberland produced a Collection Storage Plan for the Harry S Truman NHS in 1989, which summarized his earlier comments, attached to Memorandum, Superintendent, Harry S Truman to Regional Director, MWRO, December 7, 1989; files of Harry S Truman NHS, H18.

⁴⁸⁷ Letter Report, Lisa J. Delaney, HHS to Carol Dage, Harry S Truman NHS, January 12, 2000; files of Harry S Truman NHS, A80.

In 2006, partly as a result of Curator Dage serving as the Assistant Regional Curator, the park's central location, and ongoing assistance with multiple park projects within the thirteen-state Midwest Region, park staff coordinated with MWRO and GSA to lease a second space within the same off-site facility to establish the Independence Multi-Park Facility (IMPF). The IMPF was designed to provide storage for collections from other National Park System units in the Midwest Region on short- and long-term bases. Currently, partial collections from nine parks are curated in the IMPF. As Curator Dage recalled, "over the years, working in the Assistant Regional Curator capacity—we always had to scramble around and find storage. We don't have to do that anymore. We've got a place where, if collections are in transition, they can come here. They can be housed, and we have the staff to care for them."⁴⁸⁸

Artifact Conservation

When Bess Wallace Truman died in 1982, her will left the home and nearly all its contents to the federal government. NPS inherited a large collection of artifacts that, until then, had just been the everyday stuff of one family. Once the home and its contents came under NPS authority, park staff was responsible for not just the documentation of the collection, but its protection and preservation as well. The collection includes such traditional museum items as furniture, textiles (both clothing and furnishings such as rugs and tablecloths), ceramics, metals, wallpaper, and books and other paper items; it also contains standard household items such as cleaning equipment and supplies, personal care items, tools, and lawn care equipment. The Truman Home and the other buildings and structures which have become parts of the park have received frequent maintenance, rehabilitation, and restoration from 1983 through the present, detailed in Chapters 5-8. Often, these maintenance projects result in the removal of historic fabric that is accessioned into the museum collection as a field collection. While these structural restoration and maintenance projects were being conducted, the various artifacts, particularly within the Truman Home, continued to wear and deteriorate at different rates and for different reasons. As a result, park staff continually undertakes both conditions surveys and restoration projects of the museum collections.

In the hurried preparations for the public opening in May 1984, HFC Chief of Historic Furnishings Branch Sarah Olson carried out an initial conditions assessment of the furnishings within the Truman Home, identifying several pieces of furniture that needed immediate conservation at HFC. This work was performed in early 1984 and completed in time for the opening, as described in Chapter 5. Olson also coordinated the replacement of all historic window shades in the home, together with the draperies in the music room prior to the public opening.⁴⁸⁹

As described earlier in this chapter, the first several years after the Truman Home's opening, the curatorial staff was concerned primarily with inventorying and

⁴⁸⁸ Carol Dage, oral history interview, January 7, 2016.

⁴⁸⁹ Annual Superintendent's Report for 1984; files of Harry S Truman NHS.

cataloging artifacts while at the same time developing and maintaining a regular housekeeping schedule. Particularly in the years before the first HVAC system was installed in late 1985, the home needed nearly constant cleaning. As Bosso recalled, “we were cleaning like twice a week during the non-air-conditioned days. Because it would, it would just get filthy. And then when the restoration work was going on, then that was constant cleaning. I mean, there would be certain tabletops that would just be *filthy*. But you can only do so much cleaning. You feel like you were just scraping that dust on top of the furniture.”⁴⁹⁰

The first formal survey of conservation needs came in 1995, when the park commissioned two contractors to perform studies: Jane Merritt to examine the textiles in the Truman Home, and Ron Sheetz to study the wooden items. The most visible outcome of these studies was to have all of Mr. Truman’s suits removed to the offsite collection facility for care and storage, where they remain.⁴⁹¹ The following year, with additional funds from MWFA for backlog cataloging, the park hired additional staff who worked primarily on the second floor of the Truman Home, cleaning and cataloging at the same time. In addition, park staff began installing data loggers on each floor of the Truman Home to begin gathering data on environmental conditions, particularly temperature and humidity.⁴⁹² In 2001, the curatorial division began the process of protecting nitrate photographic negatives, which had a potential to be flammable, and began a multi-year process to re-house all of the park’s archival collections, moving all files into archival, acid-free folders, with original, non-acid-free papers within the files either encapsulated or interleaved with acid-free papers. In 2002, meanwhile, the park received Cultural Resources Preservation Program (CRPP) funding to purchase photographic equipment that allowed the staff to begin a program of consistent documentation of the collections, establishing a small photographic studio space within the offsite collections facility. The following year, the park received an additional \$30,000 in CRPP funds to begin a comprehensive conservation survey of most of the collections, a project that was completed in 2004.

Another source of funding was provided in 2005 to conduct two more major study and documentation projects: historic wallpapers, and historic floor coverings. Lack of staffing within the park, however, curtailed these plans, and only the historic wallpaper study was funded and programmed for 2006. This study was completed in April 2007, and created a database of the wallpapers and ceiling papers within the Truman Home, identifying the location, condition, and original manufacturers of all specimens found, including the spare and leftover rolls in the attic. Several projects in the 1990s and the 2000s involved extensive wallpaper repair by Tom Edmondson. During repairs to the Living Room ceiling and walls between 2004 and 2006, almost all of the wallpaper and ceiling paper was removed, stabilized, and re-installed. This same project involved similar work in the Master Bedroom. Portions of the wallpapers in both bathrooms and the kitchen were restored during the 1990s. As detailed in Chapter 5, the wallpapers in the Truman Home were also subjected to comprehensive survey and preservation work

⁴⁹⁰ Ibid.

⁴⁹¹ Annual Superintendent’s Report for 1995; files of Harry S Truman NHS.

⁴⁹² Annual Superintendent’s Report for 1996; files of Harry S Truman NHS.

during the extensive set of projects in 2009-2010 to install new HVAC and fire suppression systems and continue the extensive plaster and structural restoration. These complicated upgrades to the Truman Home, combined with the offsite storage facility, under the direction of only the third Chief Curator in the history of the Harry S Truman NHS will allow the unique collection of artifacts of the Truman Home to remain protected for subsequent generations to study and enjoy.

Chapter 10: Interpretation

Introduction: Interpretation and Historical Research

Historic site interpretation often appears such a straightforward thing: guides leading tours through an old building pointing out furnishings and telling stories about the former inhabitants. It has been, however, an intensely studied field for nearly a century and, particularly within NPS, a greatly contested one in recent years. Originally identified as education, NPS began referring to interpretation as early as the 1920s, distinguishing between formal, classroom-oriented pedagogy and education of visitors within a park setting. The principal objective of interpretation, according to a 1929 NPS committee report, is “to make possible the maximum of understanding and appreciation of the greater characteristic park features by the visitor, together with the stimulation of his thinking.” In 1940, an NPS archeologist further recommended a separation of formal educational approaches and interpretation in parks; rather than reciting facts to a visitor during a tour, he suggested, “We can try to make the people of that vanquished historic or prehistoric period live again in his mind.” By pointing out the shared human characteristics of the subject of a tour, NPS interpretation can “build understanding and, eventually, tolerance.”⁴⁹³ While these goals have remained largely intact, the methods by which they have been achieved or pursued has changed over the years with new approaches to historical scholarship, new administrative guidelines, new publics, and new technologies.

The relationship between interpretation and historical information within a park setting has many layers that have been examined for decades, a depth of studies that go beyond what is feasible to recount in this administrative history. Among the concerns, however, is the balance to be achieved within a tour between too much and not enough historical content, especially when confronted with visitors having different levels of interest, experience, expertise, and education. Behind this concern, however, lies the role of historians and historical scholarship within NPS’ interpretive activities. In 1936, for example, B. Floyd Flickinger, one of two historians hired to develop an overall preservation and interpretive program at Colonial National Monument, Virginia, formulated the ideal position:

The first and fundamental step in organizing the historical program in an area is the determination of a comprehensive and accurate history of the area, and then the selection, in order of importance, of the different parts of the whole story, so that there may be a basis for the selection of objects for physical development

⁴⁹³ The 1929 quote is from “General Plan of Administration for the Educational Division,” June 4, 1929; the 1940 quote is from NPS Archeologist Dale King, comments included in “Scope and Function of the Interpretation Program of the Southwestern National Monuments;” both are quoted in Barry Mackintosh, *Interpretation in the National Park Service: A Historical Perspective* (History Division, National Park Service, 1986), 83-84.

which will include an adequate minimum plan. Provision must then be made for a complete program of general research concerning the whole story of the area, and also for special study and research on particular objects and problems.

Flickinger also asserted that the preservation of the site and its restoration is a means to an end, that the “most important phase is interpretation, and preservation and development are valuable in proportion to their contribution to this phase.”⁴⁹⁴

The key theoretical approach to NPS interpretation remains the 1957 classic book, Freeman Tilden’s *Interpreting Our Heritage*. Tilden stressed the importance of accurate historical information as fundamental, as necessary but not sufficient. He prepared his book after a multi-year study of interpretive techniques within various parks and developed six important principles focused on the need to engage visitors rather than simply to convey information to them. He summarized his principles with the claim that “The chief aim of interpretation is not instruction, but provocation. Interpretation should stimulate people into a form of action.”⁴⁹⁵

Tilden’s classic study was published on the eve of a tumultuous period in the history of American historical scholarship. The 1960s and early 1970s was a time of transition within NPS as well, in several ways that had an impact on the Harry S Truman NHS as NPS staff began planning activities for the site in the early 1980s. Within the field of historical scholarship, this was the era of the New Social History, when historians began to explore topics that had long been ignored by the traditional focus on political and military events as driven by “great men.” These new topics included a range of ethnic minorities, the dispossessed, factory workers, immigrant communities, women, and more. Even those who continued to focus on traditional political themes discovered the ability to provide greater depth to their studies by applying the methods and results of these new, social history studies. The National Park Service experienced a similar reinvigoration as a huge number of parks were added to the National Park System in the 1960s and 1970s, oriented toward labor history, immigrants, women’s rights organizations, and American Indians, to name a few. Much of the impetus for this expansion came from NPS Director George Hartzog, who recalled in an oral history interview that

Bill Everhart [Chief of NPS Division of Interpretation and Visitor Services, and founder of Harpers Ferry Center] and I believed that our historical cultural parks were mostly birthplaces and battlefields. That was what we were commemorating. The military started it by saving battlefields, which ultimately in the 1930s were transferred to the Park Service and became the core of our historical parks in the system today. Birthplaces and battlefields, but nothing in between about what the creative people who came to this country accomplished. Every politician is anxious to jump out and proclaim [these sites as symbols of] the American way of

⁴⁹⁴ B. Floyd Flickinger, “Historical Methods used in the Development of Colonial National Monumnet,” 1936; quoted in Harlan D. Unrau and G. Frank Williss, *Administrative History: Expansion of The National Park Service in the 1930s* (National Park Service, Denver Service Center, 1983), 168.

⁴⁹⁵ Freeman Tilden, *Interpreting Our Heritage* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1957; third edition, 1977), 9.

life. When I became director, we hadn't commemorated any of that. We started that [effort] when Bill and I were in the Park Service.⁴⁹⁶

Hartzog, who served as NPS Director from 1964 to 1972, is widely credited for opening up the Service to these new approaches, and broadening the appeal of NPS to new audiences. Hartzog also created the Division of Visitor and Interpretive Services in February 1964, naming Everhart as Chief who then established the new Harpers Ferry Center in West Virginia. At the same time, however, Hartzog is credited with creating a divide between the earlier, shared roles of interpreter and historian. Whether he intended to do so is a matter of speculation: a story is widely circulated that he separated historians from interpreters as a result of a snub by a park historian during a tour. While the veracity of this story is debatable, Hartzog clearly was at the forefront of the new federal regulations pertaining to the protection of cultural resources and the creation of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966. As a result of that Act, which Hartzog championed, NPS took the lead role in overseeing the management of cultural resources by federal agencies and requiring that the impacts of actions of those agencies on significant historic and cultural resources be evaluated by trained professionals, including historians and archeologists. By the early 1970s, cultural resources had been elevated to a separate division within NPS, drawing to it many of the Service's historical and archeological specialists, away from park programs focused on interpretation. Andy Ketterson, Chief of Cultural Resources Management for MWRO in the early 1980s, who was the first NPS staff to come to the Truman Home after Bess Wallace Truman's death, had crossed the divide from interpretation to cultural resources in the 1970s. Describing himself as "a fallen interpreter," Ketterson recalled that

it used to be what we now know as cultural resources, was really part and parcel of interpretation as well. It hadn't been professionalized to the degree that it is today. But then at some point, certainly at the regional level, interpretation almost disappeared as a discipline. There was a short period of time when you couldn't find in the Washington office anybody who was really an interpreter. There was sort of a bleak period, and I think this must have been, what, early '70s."⁴⁹⁷

This growing isolation of historians from interpreters became a central point in a 2011 study of NPS conducted by the Organization for American Historians at the request of NPS, that drew largely on responses from NPS personnel themselves. Identifying "the split between cultural resources management and interpretation process [that] replicates itself at almost every level of NPS, from WASO to the regional offices to many of the larger parks," the authors concluded that "this pervasive divide and narrow conception of history's role that the agency perpetuates seriously impoverishes the NPS's mission in a number of ways."⁴⁹⁸ The Harry S Truman NHS was fortunate to have a substantial foundation of historical research conducted in the early years of the park's creation, supplemented by a large body of oral history interviews that were completed from 1983

⁴⁹⁶ George Hartzog, oral history interview, September 21, 2005, Section 1 page 16; brackets in original.

⁴⁹⁷ Andy Ketterson, oral history interview, August 5, 1991.

⁴⁹⁸ Anne Mitchell Whisnant, Marla R. Miller, Gary B. Nash, and David Thelen, *Imperiled Promise: The State of History in the National Park Service* (Organization of American Historians, 2011), 56.

well into the 1990s. Additionally, the park had a historian on staff for only three years, from 1995 to 1998, lacking budget support to retain this important position since then despite calls for it in recent planning documents.

Interpretation and Historical Research at Harry S Truman NHS

Obviously, the Truman Home is focused on one of America's traditional political leaders, the president of the United States. The orientation of the site, however, is on the everyday, the ordinary aspects of the Trumans' lives in Independence in the years after Harry Truman's term in office. The opportunity to present this private side of a major political figure was enticing to NPS staff and, in 1982, likely contributed to the eagerness with which MWRO supported the new park. In earlier eras, or perhaps in other locations at that time, NPS planners may have been tempted to use the Truman Home primarily to commemorate Harry Truman's presidency. The completeness of the home when Bess Wallace Truman left it to NPS in her will, however, impressed all who saw it. Andy Ketterson, together with Associate Regional Director for Planning and Resource Protection John Kawamoto, Regional Directors J.L. Dunning and Randall Pope, Tom Richter, Norm Reigle, and Historian Ron Cockrell quickly recognized the opportunity to show the private side of this popular president rather than the strictly political, a man who was interesting for his much-publicized small-town Midwestern approach to life and politics.

Early in NPS deliberations, as discussed in Chapter 3, MWRO staff decided to base the site's interpretation on the everyday life of the Trumans and to retain the sense that the family had just stepped out of the house before the tour began. While the home itself, together with the extraordinarily complete collection of artifacts, made this possible, NPS interpretive planners needed more information in order to avoid a tour based primarily on objects. The story of the how the Trumans lived their private lives in the home, surrounded by the house itself, its furnishings, and his neighboring family and friends, was key. A 1991 grant request put the case plainly, explaining that readily-available written sources did not "provide evidence of their daily routine, style of life, and habits. Yet it is just this personal information that is critical to interpret, furnish, and preserve the home in a manner that truly reflects their occupancy."⁴⁹⁹

The most effective research basis for the interpretation, as well as the collections management, of the Truman Home, was an oral history program. The Harry S Truman Home was fortunate to have a thorough historical research project, Historian Ron Cockrell's *Historic Structures Report*, by the time the home opened to form the basis of research for the interpretive program. In the course of research into this document, as described in Chapter 4, Cockrell urged conducting oral history interviews with the many still-living family, friends, and neighbors of the Trumans, or those who remembered them well. Facing a shortage of written information about this famously private couple, with

⁴⁹⁹ Draft Memorandum, with handwritten comments from Jim Williams and others, Superintendent, Harry S Truman to Regional Director, MWRO, February 5, 1991; MWRO files, H22 HSTR.



Figure 40. Historian Pamela Smoot with interview subject Jessie Colby, 1985. Photo provided by Harry S Truman NHS.

no diaries or other accounts from which to work, the reminiscences of people who knew the Trumans would be crucial. Interviews with such individuals as the Trumans' daughter, Margaret Truman Daniel, Mrs. Truman's sister-in-law and neighbor, May Wallace, Mr. Truman's second cousin and neighbor, Ardis Haukenenberry, local journalist Sue Gentry, and those who carried out various repairs on the Trumans' home and yard, conducted by Ron Cockrell himself, played a key part in both the historical and architectural sections of the HSR.

In summer 1984, Cockrell lobbied MWRO for development of an oral history program at the Truman Home (see Chapter 4 for more information about this request). Because the family whose lives were being interpreted had lived in the home so recently, the list of potential oral history subjects who could shed invaluable light on them was extensive. However, the list included many who were aging. Cockrell was successful in his lobbying efforts, and Reigle secured funding through MWRO to have additional oral history interviews conducted. In August 1985, MWRO Cultural Resources Management division hired Pamela Smoot to continue the oral history program on a temporary basis (Figure 40). Smoot was supervised by Ron Cockrell, and her official duty station was at MWRO in Omaha. Reigle coordinated with Audio Production Services at HFC to borrow professional recording equipment through the end of 1985 and requested that HFC provide archival storage for the audio tapes that resulted. Reigle also planned to request funds from Eastern National Parks and Monument Association, which, by then,

was operating the park store at the visitor center, to transcribe the interviews.⁵⁰⁰ The scope of work developed by Cockrell included interviews with approximately fifteen people “closely associated with the Truman family,” with a primary focus on the Trumans, their home, and the home’s contents, while a “secondary focus will be on the immediate surrounding neighborhood.” Interviews were to take place during two week-long periods in November and December 1985.⁵⁰¹

Smoot was a PhD candidate in history at Loyola University of Chicago at the time working in the MWRO office in Omaha on an Historic Grounds Report for the Truman Home. She proved to be adept at conversation during that period, for which reason officials at MWRO proposed to her that she continue Cockrell’s oral history program, to which she agreed. She conducted several interviews through the winter of 1985-1986, including that of Reverend Edward Hobby, who worked as a handyman for the Trumans from the early 1950s until Mrs. Truman’s death, and initial interviews with two early staff members at the Harry S Truman National Historic Site, Norm Reigle and Tom Richter. Unfortunately, Smoot’s appointment expired in early 1996 following unexcused absences, and the Historic Grounds Report was left unfinished.⁵⁰²

The following summer, MWRO hired James Williams as a GS-0025 Park Technician/Ranger. Superintendent Reigle did not secure permission to hire a Historian, but Williams’ appointment as Park Technician/Ranger allowed Reigle and Chief of Interpretation Wilson-Buell to assign Williams to conduct historical research on a part-time basis while still conducting tours. In 1991, MWRO funded a third round of oral history interviews, again hiring Williams, by then a PhD student in history at Vanderbilt University in Nashville, as a GS-0170 Historian. In both 1986 and 1991, Williams conducted dozens of interviews, including a vital conversation with Christine Wallace, Bess Wallace Truman’s sister-in-law, whose children grew up in the family home on North Delaware in the 1930s and 1940s. During this third round of oral history interviews in 1991, Williams interviewed Mrs. Wallace in the Truman Home. She and her son, David, provided invaluable insights into the lives of the Trumans and their home, as the “Wallaces unleashed a flood of memories about room décor, furnishings, room uses, etc.”⁵⁰³ According to Ron Cockrell, Williams was particularly successful at recruiting subjects for his oral history interviews. One avenue he pursued to do this was to place an article in the *Kansas City Star* announcing the project. “So,” Cockrell recalled, “he got an outpouring of people who wanted to talk, and he spent a very productive summer interviewing all sorts of folks.”⁵⁰⁴

⁵⁰⁰ Memorandum, Superintendent, Harry S Truman to Regional Director, MWRO, August 30, 1985; files of Harry S Truman NHS, H20 HSTR.

⁵⁰¹ “A Task Directive: Oral History Project, Phase I, Harry S Truman National Historic Site, Independence, Missouri,” n.d., attached to Memorandum, Acting Regional Director, MWRO to Associate Director, Cultural Resources, WASO, October 24, 1985; files of MWRO, HSTR (MWR-PC).

⁵⁰² Ron Cockrell, oral history interview, December 18, 2015.

⁵⁰³ Memorandum, Senior Research Historian, MWRO to Historian, Harry S Truman, August 28, 1991; see also David Wallace to Norman Reigle, October 13, 1986, attached to Memorandum, Ron Cockrell to Chief, Cultural Resources Management, MWRO, November 5, 1986; MWRO files, H22 (HSTR). See also Ron Cockrell, oral history interview.

⁵⁰⁴ Ibid.

The park took an important step in its research functions in March 1995 when Jon E. Taylor, formerly a seasonal historian, was hired as the first park Historian. As noted in Chapter 7, Taylor was instrumental in developing research for the Truman Farm, which Congress had recently added to the park. Taylor, together with James Williams, conducted additional oral history interviews with Truman family members, including Clifton Truman Daniel, and other people knowledgeable about the Truman Farm and Harry Truman's visits back to Independence after becoming president.⁵⁰⁵ Taylor was also active in preservation activities in Independence during his tenure, working with Superintendent Apschnikat on issues related to the existing NHL historic district and responding to potential impacts to it such as proposed demolitions. Taylor remained on staff until 1998, when he resigned to pursue a PhD in history. Following Taylor's departure, additional oral history interviews were conducted by Evans-Hatch & Associates during research for the Historic Resource Study of the Truman Farm, the Noland Home, and the Wallace Homes from 1999 to 2000. In 2000, Eastern National again provided \$4,000 to fund an intern from the Public History Program of Middle Tennessee State University, where James Williams was then a professor, to prepare transcripts and organize files associated with the oral history interviews conducted between 1985 and 1997, by then numbering ninety-eight. The park then requested two interns for the following year to continue the work. The funding request summarized the importance of the oral history program to the park:

Oral history interviews have focused on the personal, private information that is critical to properly interpret, furnish, and preserve the homes in a manner that accurately reflects the occupation of the Truman family. Though incomplete the draft oral history transcripts have proved invaluable when utilized for park planning and interpretive programs. The amount of information contained in the interviews about the personal life of the Truman family is immeasurable.⁵⁰⁶

The oral history program continued to move forward slowly as park staff could find time to review and finalize interview transcripts. Jim Williams returned during the summer of 2003 and conducted seventeen interviews focusing on the African American community and others with direct associations with the Trumans. He returned again in 2004 and 2005, completing seven more interviews. During this time, Cultural Resources staff secured funds to have the transcription and digitization work completed by contractors and began to develop oral history pages on the park website to make the many completed transcripts accessible to a wider audience. Museum Technician Darla Hostetler began managing the oral history program in 2010, continuing to prepare transcripts for public use, conduct research, update associated biographical files, and complete new transcriptions and digitization of recordings. As many have noted, the existing oral

⁵⁰⁵ Superintendent's Annual Narrative Report, January 1, 1994-September 30, 1995 [the extended time frame was used to shift the park to reporting on a fiscal year basis versus a calendar year basis]; files of Harry S Truman NHS.

⁵⁰⁶ "Robert M. Utley Research Program Grant Proposal, Harry S Truman National Historic Site. Project Title: Final Preparation, Digitization, and Dissemination of Oral History Interview Transcripts," attached to Memorandum from Carol J. Dage to Eastern National, October 13, 2000; files of Harry S Truman NHS. See also Dage to Nicole Gatto, Eastern National, August 28, 2001; files of Harry S Truman NHS, A42.

history interviews are an invaluable source of information about the Trumans and their lives in Independence, and have been used in the development of the park's interpretive programs. Many of the transcripts are now available on the park's web site.

Tours

Chapter 3 recounted the earliest development of tours of the Truman Home. Ranger-in-Charge Tom Richter had served as a supervisory interpreter at Jefferson National Expansion Memorial in St. Louis, Missouri, prior to entering on duty at Harry S Truman NHS and began planning for tours from the beginning. With the park organized primarily around an historic house museum, tours of the Truman Home are the principal means for the visiting public to learn about the Trumans and their private lives in Independence. Tours have been considered the foundation of the interpretive program from the earliest days. As a new site, and given the interest in Truman, the park drew a great deal of support from MWRO and the interpretive staff at Harpers Ferry Center (HFC). Tours of the Truman Home were also an important part of the tourism program that the City of Independence hoped to foster, and city officials frequently urged NPS to ensure that tours would be available as soon as possible. Interpretive planning in 1983 and early 1984, as with the maintenance program for the home, focused almost exclusively on getting ready for opening the home to the public in May 1984 on a compressed schedule that required intense focus and effort. Though conducted under tight time constraints, the interpretive approach established during that initial period still forms the basis for the park's ongoing interpretive program.

Richter was interested in the site's interpretation from the time he entered on duty in early 1983. Asked about his first impressions of the Truman Home, Richter recalled that "actually, to be honest, the first impression was that it wasn't as large on the inside as it seemed from the outside, even at that point. I immediately began thinking of ways to show the home, in terms of a tour and everything, but I guess I was almost stunned by the complete nature of the furnishings. . . . I think the quality of this time capsule of the 1950s, I think even at that point, sort of grabbed my attention also."⁵⁰⁷ The first official move toward development of the park's interpretive program came in May 1983, when Regional Chief of Interpretation James Schaack visited Independence to meet with Richter, who provided a tour through the home, downtown Independence, and the Truman Library. Both the opportunities and the challenges of the site were immediately apparent to Schaack. The presence of the Truman Library and its staff's willingness to work with NPS impressed him greatly, and he noted that with the museum exhibit space at the Library, "I felt we could very well be relieved of the pressure of extensive exhibitry." The home, offering the charm of a private perspective on the Trumans, also presented limitations with regard to guiding tours through it: "I find one of the most frustrating—challenging—or what have you is how to allow public viewing of the two hats and coats on the back entry rack and yet retain some potential security." Schaack then initiated contact with Alan Kent, Chief of Interpretive Planning at HFC "regarding

⁵⁰⁷ Thomas Richter, oral history interview, August 27, 1990.

what I consider is our most urgent need—specifically to provide us with assistance to meet needs of the centennial of Harry S. [sic] Truman’s birth next May.”⁵⁰⁸

Staff from HFC traveled to Independence in July 1983 to begin planning work. They were led by Deputy Manager Ellsworth (Al) Swift who, Richter recalled, “pulled rank, so to speak, to come out on the planning team.”⁵⁰⁹ Swift, together with Chief of Interpretive Planning Alan Kent and Chief of Historic Furnishings Sarah Olson, met with Schaack, Ketterson, and Richter (“the pioneer on-site man at Truman NHS”) to begin work on an Interim Interpretive Plan which included information on operational details as well as interpretive themes.⁵¹⁰ More direct planning for tours was taking place at the same time, with substantial input from Margaret Truman Daniel, who, Richter recalled, “actually gave us an idea of how the tour route should be. And to a degree, it turned out to be the tour route, except that she had in mind a few dead ends that weren’t going to be too productive. She thought we should take people into the living room so they could take a peek into the downstairs bedroom. Later on we decided that would have been a little awkward.”⁵¹¹ Richter was active in planning for the overall site interpretation during 1983, traveling to Lincoln Home NHS, in Springfield, Illinois, to examine that site’s interpretation operations.⁵¹²

The route of the tour through the home, the maximum number of visitors on a tour, and even the decision to have tours rather than having Rangers stationed in fixed locations throughout the home, were finalized once Superintendent Norm Reigle entered on duty in October 1983.⁵¹³ In a 1985 interview, Reigle discussed the origins of the tour route in great detail, which then still began at the front door and ended at the kitchen:

The tour route was set up the way it is, and the way it remains to this day, principally with several things in mind. We wanted to have a smooth flow through the house, we wanted to show everything that was possible to be shown. It became clear right from the onset that we wouldn’t be able to take people into the Gates bedroom. It also became clear that we didn’t want to have people walking into either the living room. . . The main reason we didn’t want people walking into the Gates bedroom is we didn’t know at that point how the Gates bedroom should be furnished, and we still don’t to this day, but we didn’t want to have a jam-up of people, because there was no way to get to the Gates bedroom without going through the living room and back out of the living room. We also didn’t want people to go into the music room—at least I didn’t. And the study then became a problem. That’s when the decision was made to let people look into the study and then exit through the kitchen.

⁵⁰⁸ Memorandum, Chief, Interpretation, MWRO to Associate Regional Director, Operations, MWRO, May 12, 1983; MWRO files, K815 (MWR-MI).

⁵⁰⁹ Thomas Richter, oral history interview, August 27, 1990.

⁵¹⁰ Memorandum, Deputy Manager, HFC to Regional Director, MWRO, July 20, 1983; MWRO files, K1817 (1100-IP). See also Memorandum, Acting Regional Director, MWRO to Manager, HFC, June 30, 1983; files of Harry S Truman NHS, L58.

⁵¹¹ Thomas Richter, oral history interview, August 27, 1990.

⁵¹² Annual Superintendent’s Report for 1983; files of Harry S Truman NHS.

⁵¹³ Thomas Richter, oral history interview, August 27, 1990.

Reigle then went on to point out the role that Margaret Truman Daniel had in determining the nature and the route of the tour. Reigle, he admitted, was a “terrified, new superintendent,” and was unsure how to work with Mrs. Daniel. “At that point,” he recalled,

I made the suggestion that we show her the tour route first, and started out by explaining what we were going to do, and immediately disagreement occurred. Mrs. Daniel felt that we should walk through the music room and through the study. As I reflect back on it, I think to this day that probably the one thing that got us off to a solid working relationship between Mrs. Daniel and myself, and at this point I had known her for less than fifteen minutes, I explained, ‘Mrs. Daniel, this will not work the way you want to do it because. . .’ and proceeded to walk into the music room with my hands out and graphically demonstrated how vulnerable the pictures and the piano were going to be, the vases on the mantel underneath her mother’s pictures, and described a 250-pound woman trying to squeeze by the television set. I think that really set the tone for our relationship. . . that, one, we knew what we were doing, we knew why we were doing it, and I think the fact that we were ready to defend our principles made an impression.⁵¹⁴

The maximum number of visitors on each tour was a point of contention between MWRO and park staff, with Superintendent Norm Reigle arguing forcefully in favor of limiting the number to eight per tour. Steve Harrison, the park’s initial Curator, recalled that, under pressure from MWRO, the staff experimented with different numbers of visitors on the tours but remained convinced that eight was the maximum:

And the Regional Office, for some reason, wanted larger tours. There was some pressure from them to have larger tour groups. And the park resisted that. And, finally, Norm [Reigle] said “Okay, we’ll try it.” So, we tried larger tour groups. . . .the park “tried” it—which, I’m winking my eye here. The park tried it. . . .and, I think it was a legitimate test, but everybody at the park was pretty comfortable with eight people and didn’t think having more people would work. It wouldn’t work from a staff standpoint. Probably wouldn’t work from a resource-management standpoint, and it wouldn’t work for the visitors, because they wouldn’t be able to see anything, you know. So, and that’s why they’re there: they want to see things. They want that experience. And, when you jam them in there, it’s just not helpful.⁵¹⁵

Palma Wilson, the park’s first Lead Ranger, recalled experimenting with tours of nine people in the fall of 1985. The Rangers, she recalled, “felt they couldn’t control the group, that there were too many elbows and that kind of thing, and it was too crowded.”⁵¹⁶ Reigle stood firm on the issue, particularly during the GMP process in the years immediately after the home opened in May 1984. Reigle recalled that “the two

⁵¹⁴ Norm Reigle, oral history interview, December 13, 1985.

⁵¹⁵ Steve Harrison, oral history interview, March 1, 2016.

⁵¹⁶ Palma Wilson, oral history interview, May 15, 1990.

strongest wills in that plan were mine and Chuck Odegaard, our Regional Director. For one, I refused to consider alternative methods of interpretation other than what we were doing. I mean, I wouldn't even hear about increasing the numbers of people or doing some kind of walk-through or whatever."⁵¹⁷

The route of the tour also was a subject of planning during late 1983 and early 1984. Tours took place only on the first floor, initially under a directive from the will of Bess Truman that the second floor would not be open to the public during Margaret Truman Daniel's lifetime. Soon after acquiring it, however, NPS raised concerns that the construction and underlying structure of the home would not safely support the anticipated number of visitors on the second floor, though the first floor remained structurally sound. The tour initially began at the front door and progressed through the principal living areas to the kitchen in the rear of the home where the visitors would exit (Figure 41). Palma Wilson, who entered on duty in April 1984, recalled that while Reigle and Richter had determined the route of the tour before she arrived a great deal of planning remained during the month before the tours began, in terms of the content of the tour and provisions for the safety of the home and its furnishings as well as that of its visitors (Figure 42). The Rangers all underwent an intensive, rapid training with Chief Curator Steve Harrison, "about not touching things, because of the oils and acids in our hands," and from Facility Manager Skip Brooks, "of some of the safety things that we were going to encounter." Wilson, as Lead Ranger under the direction of Richter, who was the first Chief of Interpretation, developed lists of items to be included in the introduction to the tours, "that's now part of the training packet that we give the Rangers."⁵¹⁸ In addition, local historians, as well as MWRO Historian Ron Cockrell, gave presentations to the new interpretive staff, and visits to May Wallace, Ardis Haukenberry, and Sue Gentry all provided personal insights into the Trumans and their private world. Finally, park staff conducted numerous test tours through the home in the month before the opening with staff from the Truman Library and members of the Independence Truman Centennial Commission who "provided realistic appraisals of the site's capacity for guided tours."⁵¹⁹

The security of the home's furnishings was a vital early concern in planning the tours. All staff recognized the uniqueness of the Truman Home's collection of furnishings and household and personal items, that, in its unusual completeness, it offered a remarkable view of the private lives of the Trumans. Given the small scale of the rooms and, thus, the proximity of the visitors to the innumerable small items in the home, the staff was very concerned about the potential for theft. Efforts made by Curator Harrison to prevent theft were detailed in Chapter 3, including non-intrusive and low-tech means to protect items on furniture as well as alarms triggered by pressure pads beneath carpets leading into the living room, the music room, the dining room, and the stairs to the

⁵¹⁷ Norm Reigle, oral history interview, December 22, 1989.

⁵¹⁸ Palma Wilson, oral history interview, May 15, 1990.

⁵¹⁹ Annual Superintendent's Report for 1983; files of Harry S Truman NHS.

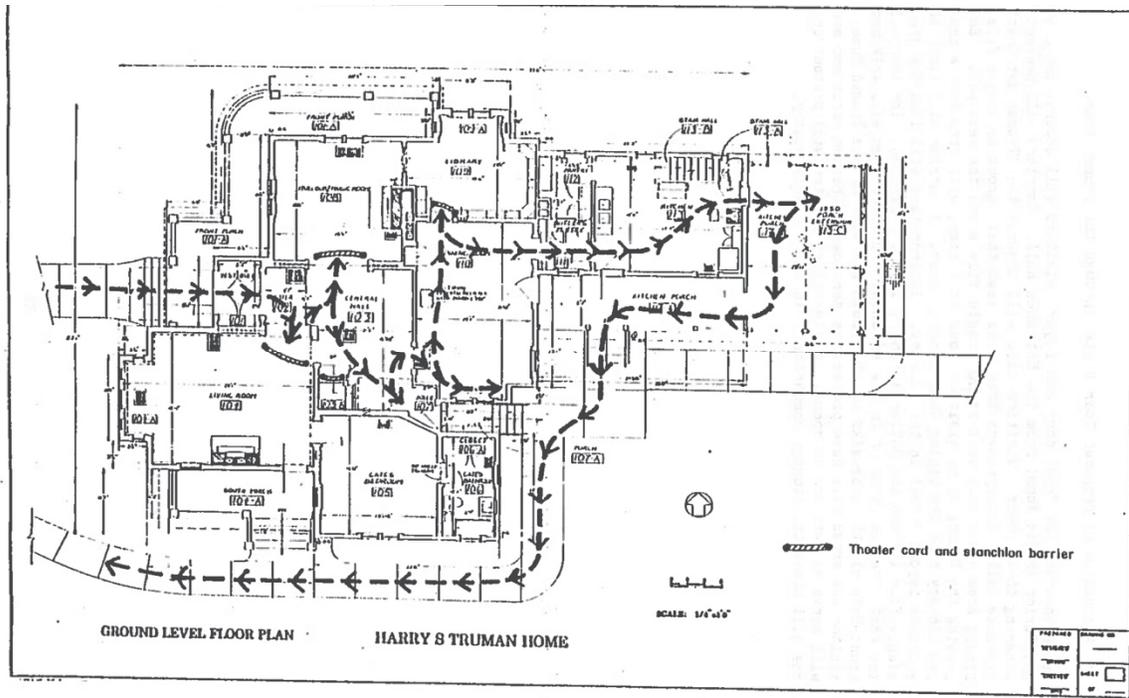


Figure 41. Original tour route through the Truman Home. Source: Interim Interpretive Prospectus, 1984.



Figure 42. Chief of Interpretation and Visitor Services Palma Wilson, 1990. Photo provided by Harry S Truman NHS.

second floor. Superintendent Reigle came to the Truman Home with a law enforcement background at Ozark National Riverways and brought with him attentiveness to security. Reigle urged a structure to the tours that would emphasize protection as well. Lead Ranger Wilson recalled that

There was such a . . . I don't know, paranoia or whatever about something being taken or something getting broken, that the original decision had been made that there was going to be two rangers on every tour. There would be the front person who would be actually the person doing the tour, and then what we called the trailer position. And that position was basically to watch people as they went through to make sure they didn't touch, make sure nothing got taken, nothing got stolen.⁵²⁰

Given their role as the principal points of contact with the public, particularly inside the Truman Home, together with Reigle's background in law enforcement, the park's early interpretive staff included several Rangers who were commissioned as law enforcement officers. As the early concern for security of the home's furnishings during tours waned, the park saw reduced need for law enforcement coverage, though commissioned Rangers remained on staff until 2001, when nearly half of the park's interpretive staff transferred to other areas. Funding and training requirements for commissioned Rangers were greater than for non-commissioned Rangers and Guides, which led to the decision to end in-house law enforcement at the park and rely on local police for security. However, the park's interpretive staff has been responsible for the Truman Home's security system, including fire and intrusion detection, since 1986, when it was assigned to Lead Ranger Palma Wilson, who was a commissioned Law Enforcement Ranger. As current Acting Chief of Interpretation Jeff Wade explained, "Alarm systems seem like, ordinarily, they would come under Maintenance, but, because, when we used to have Law Enforcement here, and the Law Enforcement Ranger did interpretation. So, Interpretation ended up being responsible for Security. So, after the Law Enforcement left, the Security remained with the Interpretation Division, so it was my responsibility to worry about the security system." (Figure 43)⁵²¹

The initial preparations for the tours were successful, and tours of the Truman Home proved immensely popular throughout the summer of 1984. Tour tickets, which were free until April 1, 1987, were distributed each day for that day's tours only. Tickets were distributed before noon throughout the summer and fall of 1984, and demand remained high during the fall and early winter with spikes to summer levels on the days surrounding Thanksgiving and Christmas. In addition to regularly-scheduled tours during the days, the park made arrangements for special evening tours in the summer of 1984 to allow local Independence residents to see the home without competition from tourists. The Junior Service League, a civic volunteer organization which provided fresh flowers

⁵²⁰ Palma Wilson, oral history interview, May 15, 1990.

⁵²¹ Jeff Wade, oral history interview, January 7, 2016; see also Palma Wilson, oral history interview, May 15, 1990. See also Annual Superintendent's Report for 2001; files of Harry S Truman NHS.



Figure 43. Acting Chief of Interpretation and Visitor Services Jeff Wade 2016. Photo by Deborah Harvey.

for the Truman Home every week, handled the reservations for these evening tours, which proved popular. Nearly 5,500 people took the special evening tours in 1984.⁵²²

After a year of giving tours, the Rangers and guides on staff had the experience to recommend changes. They found that the need for the trailer position, the second Ranger who followed the tour group to watch out for theft, was driven in part by the tour route itself. As Chief Ranger Palma Wilson recalled, “going in the front door and out the back there was a lot of blind spots. Like somebody leading you into the dining room, you couldn’t watch what the rest of the group was doing in the foyer, and so the trailer was there to kind of keep back and sort of herd people along.” In the summer of 1985, however, the staff reversed the tour route to its current orientation, in which visitors enter through the rear porch and into the kitchen for an orientation to the home. This change was made primarily as a result of studying the flow of the tour through the home and discovering that the entrance to the dining room from the front foyer created a bottle-neck that backed up the tour and made it difficult to monitor where visitors were in the house while simultaneously leading them into the dining room. A secondary consideration was the shuttle bus which the City of Independence provided (see Chapter 8 for details regarding the shuttle bus). With tours ending at the rear, visitors were not able to see the shuttle bus arriving in front of the Truman Home, which operated on a schedule and

⁵²² Annual Superintendent’s Report for 1984; files of Harry S Truman NHS.

arrived at the home only at specific times. The new configuration allowed visitors to move steadily through the home, exit through the front door, and see the shuttle bus arrive to carry them away. With the new tour route, as former Seasonal Historian James Williams recalled, “we realized that we really didn’t need that trailer position, so we discontinued it in late ’85.”⁵²³ As Superintendent Reigle noted in his Annual Report for 1985, this change also greatly improved the productivity of the interpreters.⁵²⁴

The validity and success of early tour planning was manifested by the fact that the basic structure of the tour remained intact from 1985 until 2007. Between Labor Day 2006 and Memorial Day 2007, park staff experimented with expanding the tour to thirty minutes rather than the original length of fifteen minutes. This new format, according to Superintendent Villalva in his annual report, “allowed for more information to be presented during tours, it allowed for visitors to ask more questions each stop, and it allowed for a more relaxed (slower) pace through the house. It also mitigated a previous problem sometimes experienced on the 15-minute tour format which was that it kept tours from sometimes piling onto each other.”⁵²⁵ This became the standard tour length for the winter months, though tours in the summer remained at fifteen minutes due to the volume of visitors seeking tours. Content of the tours has likewise remained largely intact from the early tours. The body of research which Cockrell compiled, together with the early structural investigations of the home and investigations into the history of the objects in the home conducted by Historian Jim Williams, remained the foundation of historical information. With new information derived from the ongoing oral history program and curatorial research, however, Rangers and Guides have more material from which to draw as they conduct their own research and formulate their tours.

Rather than change the nature of the Truman Home tours, the park’s Interpretation and Visitor Services Division has sought to expand the opportunities for interpretation of the Truman story in Independence. In 1987, park staff developed a walking tour through the Truman neighborhood, leaving from the visitor center on Main Street and extending primarily along North Delaware. Drawing largely on lot-specific research carried out by former Seasonal Historian James Williams, the walking tours provided additional information on the context of the Truman Home, and Mr. Truman’s relationship with his community. They were offered on a seasonal basis from May to September each summer and were popular, frequently drawing more than 500 people per year.⁵²⁶ Park interpretive staff also began developing programs for off-site locations, including schools and community organizations. In particular, interpretive staff under Chief of Interpretation Karen Tinnin was active in developing educational programs to

⁵²³ James Williams, oral history interview.

⁵²⁴ Annual Superintendent’s Report for 1985; files of Harry S Truman NHS.

⁵²⁵ Annual Superintendent’s Report for 2007; files of Harry S Truman NHS.

⁵²⁶ Annual Superintendent’s Report for 1987, with subsequent years providing the numbers of tour participants; files of Harry S Truman NHS. See also James Williams, oral history interview, January 26, 2016.

supplement the fourth-grade Missouri history curriculum, with a particular focus on Harry Truman.⁵²⁷

Another component of the park's outreach program came in the mid-1990s when the Interpretive and Visitor Service Division, under Tinnin's direction, began developing a video program aimed at fourth-grade school groups. Working under an initial grant of \$2,000 from the Chevrolet Corporation as part of the Parks as Classroom initiative and in partnership with KCPT Channel 19, a public broadcast television station in Kansas City, the park raised additional funds through 1994 and 1995 to produce "To the Best of My Ability: The Story of Harry S Truman." The film used three volunteers, young actors from the Kansas City metropolitan area, and incorporated live action, historical footage of President Truman in Independence, and historic photographs with a script developed by park staff. The fifteen-minute film was completed in 1996, and made its debut performance on August 13, 1996, at the park's visitor center. It was then broadcast on public television stations in the Kansas City area through 1996 and was shown on Public Broadcast System stations nationwide in 1997.⁵²⁸

Truman Farm Home

The addition of the Truman Farm Home to Harry S Truman NHS in late 1993 added new interpretive opportunities. With the focus of the Truman Home in Independence being the Trumans' private lives primarily after his term as president, the Farm Home offered the chance to interpret Truman's private life before his political career began. For those who know of Truman only in terms of his political career, his background as a farmer while a young man can come as a revelation, opening up a fascinating new side to his political life. Unlike the rapid pace of preparing for the Truman Home's opening in 1984, the Truman Farm took longer to prepare as a result of its distance from Independence and lack of additions to park staff to accommodate the new site. The Farm Home was opened briefly for tours in May 1995 in association with that year's Harry's Hay Day celebration, when 189 people toured the house. The Farm Home had its Grand Opening a year later, on May 8, 1996, when regularly-scheduled, Ranger-guided tours commenced. Tours of the Farm Home were offered free at thirty-minute intervals on Fridays through Sundays between May 10 and August 25, 1996. During that period, 1154 people took tours through the Farm Home.⁵²⁹

⁵²⁷ See, for example, a series of letters from Karen Tinnin to fourth-grade teachers in multiple schools in the Kansas City metropolitan area October 10, 1995, soliciting input on educational programs; files of Harry S Truman NHS, K18.

⁵²⁸ Ronald J. Mack to Jennifer D. Archer, National Park Foundation, November 21, 1994; David D. Schafer, Harry S Truman NHS to Neil Waldman, CBS Entertainment, August 30, 1995; files of Harry S Truman NHS, K18. Memorandum, Superintendent, Harry S Truman to Field Director, Midwest Field Area, September 28, 1995; files of Harry S Truman NHS, A98 (MWR-MI) HSTR. Program Announcement, film debut, August 13, 1996.

⁵²⁹ Annual Superintendent's Report for 1996; files of Harry S Truman NHS.

Interpretive activity at the Truman Farm Home remained primarily a summertime activity, with tours provided every thirty minutes either two or three days per week, depending on staff availability, through 2005. Budget shortfalls in the years after 2005 created a pattern of more sporadic tours of the Farm Home. The provisional nature of Farm Home tours was explained in the 1999 revision of the park's GMP, which noted that "Tours will be provided when sufficient staff is available." Tours were limited to six visitors per tour due to the relatively small spaces in the home.⁵³⁰ The Farm Home was closed in 2013 as a result of the federal sequestration that year and, as of 2016, has not reopened because of budget and staff shortages. However, interpretation at the Farm Home is available through passive means. Park staff coordinated with HFC in 1996 to provide a wayside exhibit at the site. Completed in 1997, the exhibit, titled "Farmer Truman," uses text and historic photographs to allow interpretation when no park staff or volunteers are available. Two new wayside exhibits were produced in 2008.⁵³¹

The interpretive promise of the site was augmented by acquisition in 2008 and 2011 of the two lots immediately south of the original five-acre Truman Farm Home parcel. The rear lot, acquired in 2008, is vacant and is useful primarily as a buffer between the Farm Home and nearby commercial and residential developments and as potential space for future parking and a small maintenance facility. The front lot, however, acquired in November 2011, is occupied by a modern commercial building, formerly a restaurant and more recently a paint store. The need for a visitor orientation and ticketing facility at the site was identified shortly after the federal government accepted the Farm Home as a donation from Jackson County in 1993. The two lots were officially targeted for federal acquisition in the 1999 revision of the park's GMP, which identified the modern commercial building as a potential visitor center and support services facility. It took more than a decade to complete the sale, and park staff first toured the building in early 2012 (see Chapter 8 for additional details regarding the acquisition of both lots). A combination of staff shortages and inadequate budgets have since delayed the building's conversion for use as a visitor facility, and it remains empty.

Interpretive Plans

The time between the designation of the Truman Home as a NHS in late 1982 and opening it to the public in May 1984 was unusually short for a new unit of the National Park System. Since time for interpretive planning, like all other aspects of planning for this park, was compressed, MWRO and park staff created a provisional document, the Interim Interpretive Prospectus, to guide interpretation until a Long-Range Interpretive Plan could be completed. Approved in early April 1984, the document was acknowledged as a short-term plan to ensure that the park would open the next month with an interpretive program, though the preparers "anticipated that the document may have to

⁵³⁰ *Harry S Truman National Historic Site: General Management Plan Revision* (June 1999), 17.

⁵³¹ Memorandum, Karen Tinnin to Dick Hoffman, HFC, May 15, 1996; files of Harry S Truman NHS, D6215. See also Annual Superintendent's Report for 1997, files of Harry S Truman NHS.

remain in effect for a few years afterward.”⁵³² The Interim Interpretive Prospectus was designed primarily as an operational document, leaving the conceptual matters for the intended subsequent Interpretive Prospectus and Statement for Interpretation. Regional Chief of Interpretation James Schaack produced the document with comments from Richter and HFC interpretive staff, as described earlier in this chapter. Despite eschewing conceptual topics, the document pointed to the “one essential interpretive purpose the house structure and grounds serve that cannot be duplicated at any other site related to the 33rd President.” This was the ability to show the Trumans’ private lives, the “personal experiences, emotions, crises, and the whole gamut of actions and reactions common to the subjects of our own life drama; common also to each of us as a visitor in recreating individually the concept with our own experience.” The interpretive goal, according to the document, was to “effect this ‘commonality’ of life between the viewer and this Presidential subject.”

Richter also suggested at this early date the period of interpretation for the home, officially the year of Bess Truman’s death “but broadly including the approximate 11 years spanning the death of the President and that of Mrs. Truman,” which provides “the most effective period in terms of preservation and maintenance of structure and contents.” The preliminary interpretive themes which Richter worked out included the respective family histories of Harry and Bess, their early marriage life with their daughter, Margaret, and his early, local, commercial and political career before becoming president. These led to the key interpretive theme, the Truman Home as the home of the president “in administrative, if not physical, retirement. . . . The house provided both of them the release from stress, and the life shelter to reflect on the life experience. The home now continued to serve the Trumans, functioning much as they just left it, as the focal base about which, it can be said, their lives truly revolved, as an insight into the familiar role assigned by most visitors to their own houses.”⁵³³

In operational terms, the Interim Interpretive Prospectus defined the early tour patterns described above, moving from the front door to the kitchen in the rear, with tour sizes of eight described as optimal. The plan called for two Rangers or guides, one to give the tour and one to serve as a trailer, with scheduled tours limited to fifteen minutes. The Interim Interpretive Prospectus included discussions of access for those who needed wheelchairs and for visually-impaired visitors. The historic Fire Station was then identified as a likely site for ticketing and visitor services, though the Truman Library remained as a possible staging area, with transportation provided via the city’s proposed shuttle system. The minimum staffing as Richter identified it, was four park interpreters on site during peak periods. With the anticipated minimal budget, however, “we may be faced with operating a full and viable interpretive program with considerable assistance from volunteers.” Richter also identified the need for an audio-visual orientation program, either a video or a slide program, approximately ten minutes in length, together with two interior exhibit panels.⁵³⁴

⁵³² *Harry S Truman National Historic Site Interim Interpretive Prospectus* (approved by MWRO Regional Director April 3, 1984), 1; files of Harry S Truman NHS, Larry Villalva collection.

⁵³³ *Ibid.*, 7-8.

⁵³⁴ *Ibid.*, 15.

The Interim Interpretive Prospectus remained the only interpretive planning document until 1993, when Chief of Interpretation Karen Tinnin prepared a Statement for Interpretation. This new document drew substantially from the interim prospectus, including the principal themes and purposes of the site, the general themes for the tours, and basic operational methods. The 1993 Statement for Interpretation was prepared in the wake of the original GMP, however, and called for interpretation to support the GMP's plan to protect the surrounding neighborhood and the expanded boundaries of the park. The walking tours, conducted during the summer, were designed "to focus on the significance of the district to the Truman home."⁵³⁵ The 1993 Statement for Interpretation placed additional emphasis on the duties of interpreters regarding care for the collections, housekeeping, maintenance, law enforcement, and cooperation with other Truman-related sites and local historic sites. The 1993 document likewise emphasized the need to "Increase overall park interaction with the local school districts. . . as well as interaction with local community groups."⁵³⁶

A significant departure for the 1993 Statement for Interpretation was a discussion of park users and use patterns, relying on visitor surveys. The park had not yet conducted formal surveys, and, though staff had data on the points of origin of visitors, they had no information regarding perceptions of, and satisfaction with, the park. The 1993 document drew upon existing visitor survey data compiled by the City of Independence in 1990, which showed the appeal of historic sites to the city's visitors and the strong association in the visitors' minds between Independence and President Truman. This preliminary data suggested the need to conduct further visitor surveys. Finally, the 1993 Statement for Interpretation provided much more detailed descriptions and analyses of the various types of visitor interactions and the ways that each could be used to promote the park's significance. These interactions included ticket distribution, guided tours, roving guides outside the Truman Home to interact less formally with visitors who come directly to the home rather than to the visitor center, and the walking tour.⁵³⁷

The 1993 Statement for Interpretation remained the guiding document for the park's interpretation for the next seven years. In late 1999, Superintendent Sanders and Chief of Interpretation Tinnin began planning for the park's Long-Range Interpretive Plan (LRIP). This was a far more involved planning process than the previous interpretive documents had been, with a week-long workshop planned for early January 2000. Staff from MWRO as well as representatives from other local historic sites and institutions were invited to participate in the workshop, which was designed to develop key story elements for the tours, definitions of the park's goals for visitor experiences, interpretive themes, and alternate means for presenting the interpretive themes in addition to guided tours.⁵³⁸ The workshops included facilitation by planning staff from HFC, who

⁵³⁵ *Harry S Truman National Historic Site, Statement for Interpretation* (approved by Superintendent Ronald Mack, February 12, 1993), 16; files of Harry S Truman NHS, K18.

⁵³⁶ *Ibid.*, 19.

⁵³⁷ *Ibid.*, 29-38.

⁵³⁸ See letters to multiple participants from Superintendent James Sanders confirming participation, November 19, 1999; files of Harry S Truman NHS, D62. See also Agenda, Harry S Truman National

prepared a summary of potential interpretive themes and visitor experience goals for review by park staff later in January 2000. The discussions in early 2000 had the benefit of additional research about the Trumans, his political career, and their lives in Independence, well beyond what was available in the early 1980s when the interim prospectus was developed. The potential interpretive themes developed by HFC showed this greater depth by considering a host of concepts that related his political career before, during, and after the presidency, to the home in Independence. The potential interpretive themes also included the Wallace and Noland Homes that surrounded the Trumans and the Truman Farm in Grandview as opportunities to paint a richer picture of Truman, the man--his origins, concerns, ambitions, frustrations, and triumphs.⁵³⁹

Over the next two months, park staff continued to refine the draft interpretive themes, always keeping the focus on the relationship between the private Harry Truman in Independence and the political Harry Truman in Washington. The relationship was identified as extending in both directions: the impact of Truman's upbringing in Independence and in Grandview impacting his role as senator and president, and his political career influencing him on his return to Independence in 1953. In March 2000, Superintendent Sanders delivered the nine interpretive themes to Paul Lee at HFC for inclusion in the draft LRIP.⁵⁴⁰ Lee then prepared the preliminary draft LRIP in May 2000, subtitled "A Most Uncommon Common Man," a title closely related to the themes that emphasized the connection between Truman's private and public lives.⁵⁴¹ Following multiple rounds of staff revisions, the draft LRIP was released in early August 2000 to the participants in the workshop, including representatives of other organizations and sites in Independence, for comments before being finalized.⁵⁴²

The final LRIP was released in November 2000. The document presents the nine interpretive themes which shape the overall story and significance of the park and which are designed to inform the range of visitor interactions within the Truman Home and in other locations. The LRIP then analyzes the existing visitor experiences, including how visitors typically locate and arrive at the park, the nature and limitations of the Truman Home tours, and the current status of the Truman Farm in Grandview. The LRIP notes that the park currently has no onsite curriculum-based education program, due largely to limited staff and a lack of indoor facilities. One of the key developments of the 2000 LRIP was the emphasis on strengthening "the interpretive links among the various Truman-related sites in the area," particularly with the Truman Library and Museum and the Jackson County Courthouse. The LRIP called for additional planning and studies in

Historic Site, Long-Range Interpretive Planning Workshop, January 9-14, 2000; files of Harry S Truman NHS, K18.

⁵³⁹ Draft Interpretive Themes, Harry S Truman National Site, attached to email from Paul Lee, DSC to James Sanders et al., January 28, 2000; files of Harry S Truman NHS, K18.

⁵⁴⁰ Draft Interpretive Themes for Harry S Truman National Historic Site, February 28, 2000; Interpretive Themes for Harry S Truman National Historic Site, attached to email from James Sanders to Paul Lee, March 14, 2000; files of Harry S Truman NHS, K18.

⁵⁴¹ Draft LRIP attached to email from Paul Lee to James Sanders et al., May 18, 2000; files of Harry S Truman NHS, D18.

⁵⁴² Memorandum, Superintendent, Harry S Truman to Park Interpretive Planning Team, Harry S Truman, August 2, 2000; files of Harry S Truman NHS, D18.

partnership with the Truman Library, for example, an expanded, curriculum-based education program related to the Truman sites. The Truman Library already had an active education program, and the LRIP envisioned the park supporting and supplementing the Library's programs with field trips to the Truman Home and the Truman Farm. "Viewing the education program as a partnership endeavor," the LRIP noted, "also can involve the sharing of indoor meeting areas." This would allow for an expansion of the park's own programming to other sites, including the Truman Library, the Jackson County Courthouse, and other public buildings. Referencing the recently-completed GMP, the LRIP also recommended that the several Truman-related sites in Independence collaborate with city, county, and state authorities to provide clear directional signs to assist visitors in finding the sites. In addition, the LRIP recommended that several partnering sites maintain accurate and up-to-date information about all of the sites, and that they consider the possibility of issuing joint ticket sales at the various sites.

The LRIP also explored the new interpretive possibilities of the Truman Farm and the Noland Home for the first time. Again referencing the GMP, the LRIP identified the Noland Home as a staging area for tours of the Truman Home and to serve as "a vehicle to expand the stories, present a more complete picture of the Truman family, and connect the Farm to the Independence site." The first floor of the Noland Home was to be used for exhibits, possibly with audio-visual components, which would focus on the Truman neighbors and the neighborhood, the architecture of the Truman Home as seen from the Noland Home's front porch, the interactions between the Truman and Wallace families, the role of the Secret Service, the issues and decisions of the Truman presidency, and historic preservation at the park. The interpretive arrangement of the Truman Farm, meanwhile, was the potential visitor contact center to be established in the modern building immediately south of the Farm Home. The building would contain exhibits oriented toward the working farm, with additional audio-visual programs that emphasized the size of the original farm and the nature of Harry Truman's relationship to it. The LRIP also envisioned a walking tour through the farm property augmented by additional wayside exhibits. Recognizing that guided tours provide the optimal experience for visitors to gain appreciation for the site and its significance, the LRIP addressed the limitations imposed by available staff and budgets. Because the furnishings in the Farm Home are not as original and intact as in the Truman Home in Independence, the LRIP left open a range of interpretive possibilities regarding the interior of the Farm Home, pending additional studies of the furnishings and architecture.

Because the park had traditionally been limited by budget shortfalls and the difficulty of fully staffing the site, the LRIP provided detailed information regarding the staffing needs to implement the several proposals. These recommendations included four GS-5 Park Guides, four GS-5 Seasonal Park Guides, and a GS-9 Historian to provide the interpreters with historical information and to present special programs. Finally, the LRIP presented a list of potential new media and programs that would help to promote the site and inform visitors, including new and revised brochures, bulletins, and folders; an expanded and enhanced website; new education programs; directional signage; and extensive new exhibits and audio-visual programs for the Noland Home and the Truman Farm. As an example of the new media programs, the park, in 2000, photographed

approximately 100 items from the collection and provided 180-degree panoramic photographs of four of the Truman Home's rooms for display on the web site. Subsequent upgrades to the web site during the 2000s included oral history transcripts and online exhibits featuring museum collections.

While several of the proposals in the 2000 LRIP have yet to be developed, including the interpretive program at the Truman Farm, an important step was taken the following year with the development of a formal visitor survey program. The park developed the survey program in association with the University of Idaho's Park Studies Unit (PSU) which had served as NPS's primary social science unit since 1979. The goals of the park's survey were two-fold: to determine overall visitor satisfaction, and to gauge visitors' understanding of the significance of the site. The survey methods included distributing survey cards to visitors for fixed periods each year. During the initial year of study in 2000, the time allotted for the distribution of cards was not sufficient to secure a valid sample, and PSU staff recommended not reporting the results. Beginning in 2001, however, staff distributed the survey cards during a four-week period at the visitor center. In 2001, the survey showed that 94% of visitors were satisfied with the park's facilities and services, but only 39% understood the significance of the park, a disappointing figure that was attributed largely to tallying the results incorrectly. The park staff refined its methods of tallying the results in 2002, however, yielding more realistic and statistically significant results. Park interpretive staff, in accordance with the LRIP, continued to focus on explaining the significance of the site to visitors. By 2004, more than 80% of the site's surveyed visitors understood and appreciated the significance of the site, a figure that increased to 90% by 2007.⁵⁴³

Exhibits

Since the Truman Home was completely intact and fully furnished when NPS assumed responsibility, it had no room for exhibits, which, in any event, would have posed an intrusion on the home's domestic atmosphere. It was clear from the beginning that the home would be used only for tours and that visitor orientation, ticketing, and staging would have to be provided at another location, ultimately the former Fire Station No. 1. This visitor center would have space for exhibits that would offer additional information about Harry Truman and his life in Independence. Park staff, particularly Chief Ranger Tom Richter, met with staff from HFC in 1984 to develop the interpretive materials that would supplement tours of the Truman Home. Although the initial effort was focused on a park brochure and an audio-visual program to provide an orientation to visitors, planning for exhibits began soon thereafter. In 1986, park staff began coordinating with HFC on development of two exhibits for the visitor center, "Residents of 219 North Delaware Street" and "Exploring the Life of President Truman." Both exhibits were developed by HFC and consisted of historic photographs from the Truman Library supplemented by selections from the HABS photographs taken by Jack Boucher

⁵⁴³ Summary results, and occasional discussions, of the visitor satisfaction and site appreciation surveys can be found in the Annual Superintendent's Reports, 2000-2007; files of Harry S Truman NHS.

in early 1983, with accompanying text. The exhibits were designed to be hung on the walls of the visitor center and were completed by a private contractor, CTI Exhibits in Denver, Colorado, in 1986.⁵⁴⁴

While these first two exhibits were being completed in the fall of 1986, Superintendent Reigle suggested an additional three exhibits that park staff had developed: “Exploring the President’s Home Town,” “The Extended Family,” and “Brief History of Fire Station #1.” The budget for any new exhibits was uncertain, but Reigle hinted that “if we could get design and estimates, perhaps I could scratch for funds. Of course any Harpers Ferry Center money would be greatly appreciated.”⁵⁴⁵ Reigle made a formal request to HFC for technical assistance after clearing it with MWRO. Cindy Darr, from HFC’s Division of Museum Production, again prepared the panels. Darr oversaw the design and layout of the exhibits through late 1987 and into early 1988, with draft designs completed by May 1988. The park then contracted with Concept Development Corporation to produce the three exhibit panels in the summer of 1988 for installation later that year.⁵⁴⁶

In the late 1990s, the Truman Library initiated an extensive renovation project and, in 2000, donated several exhibit cases which it no longer needed to the park. The park’s Cultural Resources Division then took the lead in developing a series of temporary exhibits consisting of objects from the park’s collection with accompanying text. Seven themes were developed for the first year, including Christmas and New Years at the Truman Home, the presidential yacht and airplane, family recipes, preservation techniques used in the Truman Home, NPS Anniversary, the three westward trails in Independence, Truman’s election, and Democratic Party memorabilia.⁵⁴⁷ This continued a trend of implementing rotating exhibits in the cases in the lobby of the visitor center that continues to the present. The visitor center now contains five exhibit cases to house changing exhibits, four of them the responsibility of the Cultural Resources Division and one the responsibility of the Interpretive and Visitor Services Division. As Acting Chief of Interpretation Jeff Wade noted, however, the curatorial staff “usually will help with the interpreters case.”⁵⁴⁸

The addition of the Noland Home to the Harry S Truman NHS added an opportunity to expand the park’s exhibit program. As described in detail in Chapter 6, the poor condition of the Noland Home, combined with a lack of adequate funds, led to a

⁵⁴⁴ Norman Reigle to John Carveth, CTI Exhibits, August 27, 1986; Memorandum, Superintendent, Harry S Truman to Manager, HFC, September 6, 1986; Reigle to Dan Stillwell, CTI Exhibits, October 8, 1986; Memorandum, Superintendent, Harry S Truman to Manager, HFC, October 23, 1986; files of Harry S Truman NHS, D6215.

⁵⁴⁵ Memorandum, Superintendent, Harry S Truman to Deputy Manager, HFC, October 30, 1986; files of Harry S Truman NHS, D6215.

⁵⁴⁶ Memorandum, Superintendent, Harry S Truman to Manager, Harpers Ferry Center, June 29, 1987; Memorandum, Exhibits Specialist, HFC to Superintendent, Harry S Truman, May 5, 1988; Memorandum, Project Supervisor, Division of Museum Production, HFC to Contract Specialist, May 18, 1988; Acting Superintendent, Harry S Truman to Susan Davis, Concept Development Corporation, June 9, 1988; files of Harry S Truman NHS, D6215.

⁵⁴⁷ Annual Superintendent’s Report for 2000; files of Harry S Truman NHS.

⁵⁴⁸ Jeffrey Wade, oral history interview, January 7, 2016.

long delay before the home could be rehabilitated for use. After being acquired by NPS in 1991, the Noland Home received basic maintenance to stabilize it and make it safe, but the home's complete restoration and rehabilitation did not begin until 2010. The entire interior of the home was rehabilitated while park staff coordinated with exhibit planning staff from HFC to develop a series of exhibits for the home's first floor. As completed, the exhibits spread throughout four rooms and use historic photographs, maps, tactile objects, and video and audio recordings to present information about Harry Truman's personal life, his courtship of Bess Wallace, which began from the Noland Home, the contrast between the Truman's public and private lives, and the challenges Truman faced as president. All of these issues are presented against the backdrop of the Truman's neighborhood, where they lived through it all. It is designed to supplement information that is provided in the orientation film in the visitor center and to allow visitors waiting for a tour to learn more about the Trumans while sheltered from the elements. The goal with the exhibits was to avoid duplicating the information presented in the visitor center and, instead, focus on the courtship of Harry Truman and Bess Wallace and Truman's family—his aunts, uncles, and cousins—with whom he was so close. The exhibits in the Noland Home thus reinforce the theme of the LRIP, Harry Truman as a "Most Uncommon Common Man."

Chapter 11: Administration

Shortly after taking responsibility for the Truman Home in late 1982, NPS officials committed to a challenging goal. The Truman Home would be open and available for tours, they claimed, by May 1984, when the City of Independence would celebrate their hometown hero's one-hundredth birthday. This accelerated schedule, driven in part by desires of the City of Independence to support their fledgling tourism program, was considerably faster than normal for a National Park System historic site. The planning and preservation, restoration, and rehabilitation work that normally would occupy several years before a historic house opened to the public, in this case, took barely eighteen months. The need to have the Truman Home open in so short a time forced the initial planning into an abbreviated mode, doing only what was necessary to meet the opening schedule. This could have been disastrous, particularly given the necessary lead time for federal budget submittals; there simply was not enough time to completely come to grips with the scope of either curatorial or rehabilitation needs, for example. Sound foresight on the part of the Midwest Regional Office and the park's early staff, however, created an administrative framework that was flexible enough, and a resource protection approach that was cautious enough, to allow park staff to have the home open on schedule while ensuring the site's long-term stability and protection.

Budgets for the Park: An On-going Concern

Normal Reigle seemed to some like an unusual choice as the inaugural Superintendent of the Harry S Truman NHS. Reigle, who came to the park with a background in natural rather than cultural resources management and had never been a Superintendent, was in charge of shepherding the historic home of a former President to opening on a compressed schedule with intense public scrutiny. Reigle proved himself an adept and forceful manager, however, as he oversaw development of the new park from within while advocating actively at the Midwest Region for a budget and staffing level that would allow the park to provide a solid interpretation program and protect the site's architectural, landscape, and curatorial resources. Within weeks of his arrival in October 1983, Reigle met with Acting Regional Director Randall Pope in Omaha to discuss the park's development. The park's budget for 1984, which was an estimate based on only limited specific knowledge of the site's particular maintenance, curatorial, or administrative needs, was \$250,000, with a staff allocation of three full-time equivalents (FTE). Full-time equivalent is a measure of staff time defined by the hours one full-time employee works. The number of hours worked by employees who are part-time is expressed as a fraction of a FTE; added together, the total number of hours performed by both full-time and part-time staff in any given year, regardless of pay grade, represents the FTE allocation for that year. Upon seeing the site, Reigle was convinced that neither the base budget nor the staff allocation was sufficient for its long-term survival. At Pope's request, he quickly developed an initial plan in November 1983 that has served,

with modifications, as the site's ongoing operational blueprint. In a 1985 interview, Reigle underscored the importance of his November 1983 memorandum. Noting that the interview was being conducted in the interests of a future administrative history of the park, he argued that "I think that is a very, very key document for any consideration of an administrative history. All the groundwork was really laid in that memorandum."⁵⁴⁹

At the time, the staff consisted only of Reigle and Ranger-in-Charge Tom Richter, with Administrative Technician Joan Sanders entering on duty later in November 1983. This small staff was then sharing a single office in the Truman Library, and no decisions had yet been made regarding future office space or visitor contact facilities. In preparing his November 1983 memorandum, Reigle started with the assumption that the current level of staffing and funding and the locational arrangements were not sustainable. "We could have gotten by there [Truman Library] for a year or two," he recalled in 1985, "but in the long run it just wouldn't work, and our discussions clearly indicated that."⁵⁵⁰ His memorandum established the four-part division of staff that remains in place: administration, interpretation, cultural resources/curatorial, and maintenance. Given the shortness of time for budget planning, the lack of time to develop a full maintenance schedule before opening, and the likelihood that extensive rehabilitation work would require contracting the work rather than doing it in-house, Reigle suggested initially that "it would appear to be wise to defer establishment of a permanent maintenance position at this time." He noted also that emergency curation had been arranged through the use of Park Restoration and Improvement Program (PRIP) funds. These funds provided salary, travel, and per diem for Susan Kopczynski's detail to the park without using any of the park's FTE allocation. This, he explained, "gives us some breathing room to hire a permanent curator who should EOD [enter on duty] by May 1 in order to provide some overlap and last minute assistance in final preparation of the home for opening on May 12." The curator position, he recommended, would be programmed at GS-9, with a Museum Aide programmed at GS-3. While Reigle had no curatorial experience, he was aware of the significance of the collection of artifacts in the Home, and argued that "neither the aid [sic] nor the curatorial function lends itself to contract services."

Having dispensed with maintenance and curatorial functions, Reigle's chief concern was interpretation. This was the most important consideration in the six months before the home's opening, as it would establish the public first impression of the home and NPS. As discussed in Chapter 3, Reigle strongly advocated for close coordination with the City of Independence in locating a ticketing and visitor orientation site on or in close proximity to the courthouse square in downtown Independence; by supporting the city's new tourism initiatives, NPS had the opportunity to foster closer relations with the city. Tours of the Truman Home, Reigle said, would be limited to eight people per tour and would last fifteen minutes, and he earnestly recommended that tours be conducted by NPS staff. Chapter 3 recounted his principal argument against using volunteers to provide tours of the home in order to avoid competing with the city for scarce volunteer time. In his November 1983 memorandum, however, he offered an additional argument:

⁵⁴⁹ Norm Reigle, oral history interview, December 13, 1985.

⁵⁵⁰ Ibid.

I would like to point out that at this point the visitor has come into the town, has ridden on a city-funded shuttle system, has picked up his tickets (the 11 to 25 percent of the lucky ones) at a city facility operated by city volunteers, hopefully watched the NPS-produced audio-visual program, and has arrived at the Truman Home without yet seeing a National Park Service employee. If we continue to utilize the guard service during the periods when the home is open, the visitor will then encounter an armed, brown-uniformed guard untrained to lead tours or handle public [sic] at the front gate. . . . Therefore, we are requesting that the National Park Service staff the home, leading tours and protecting the facility during hours of operation.

With a combination of seasonal, part-time, and full-time interpretation staff, together with administrative and curatorial staff, but without a Facility Maintenance Specialist, Reigle proposed an allocation of 14.09 FTE, with a budget of \$364,820 for FY85.⁵⁵¹

As recounted in Chapter 3, Reigle and Administrative Technician Joan Sanders met with MWRO staff in January 1984 to present his staff allocation plan, and they argued the case successfully. In the course of that meeting, the participants determined that a Facility Maintenance Specialist would be necessary, and that one of the Park Technician positions should be designated as Lead, an upgrade. Reigle was given approval to fill eleven permanent positions, seven of which were recruited through MWRO: Lead Park Technician, Facility Management Specialist, Secretary, and three Park Technicians. The park, meanwhile, issued a Recruitment Bulletin for Seasonal Park Technicians, and the Office of Personnel Management issued a Recruitment Bulletin for the Museum Aide position. By April 29, 1984, the park supported a staff of fifteen.⁵⁵²

While leading the park through the tumultuous opening year of 1984, Reigle sought to secure sufficient funds and staffing allocations for FY85, although the deadline for submitting a budget proposal for that year had already passed. The offer by the City of Independence of rent-free office space saved the federal government money, but the cost of leasing a building was to be provided from a special leasing account, not from the Operations of the National Park Service (ONPS) funds that formed the park's base budget. With the new office space, however, the park had to cover additional costs including a custodial contract, a second vehicle, and a new lock system, all of which had to come from the ONPS budget. Reigle made room in the budget initially by eliminating school programs and off-site interpretive efforts. His base operations, he calculated, required \$397,499 and 13.89 FTE. In spite of these financial constrictions, the park's FY85 budget was to be only \$334,700, with a staff allocation of 12.0 FTE. "The ramifications of non-relief from our present situation," he argued in a strongly-worded memorandum to MWRO, "are almost too grim to consider." The park had made commitments to the city, and the city was providing an extraordinary range of benefits including free rent for both the visitor center and the headquarters office, the remodeling costs for the visitor center, and volunteers to help with the visitor center and at the

⁵⁵¹ Memorandum, Superintendent, HSTR to Acting Regional Director, MWRO, November 8, 1983; files of Harry S Truman NHS, H14.

⁵⁵² Annual Superintendent's Report for 1984; files of Harry S Truman NHS.

Truman Library. Even cutting all except non-essential expenses and staff, Reigle pointed out that the park's budget was nearly \$18,000 short of what would be needed in FY85.⁵⁵³

Reigle sought additional funds throughout 1984 for equipment due to the shortfall in the park's ONPS budget, including a computer, tape recording equipment for oral histories, emergency medical supplies, and law enforcement equipment. He received additions to his base budget in December 1984 ("after not too friendly discussions at region [MWRO]"), and in April, May, and June 1985. The 1986 base ONPS budget was \$348,000, still below the final FY85 budget (with additions) of \$356,100, with an FTE allocation of 13.0. Substantial savings in FY86 came from elimination of the contract security service once the Truman Home's new alarm system was installed. In addition, two permanent Park Ranger positions were vacated in September 1986, which were filled with seasonal employees, giving the park more flexibility within its FTE allotment.⁵⁵⁴

An important shift in the park's finances came in 1987 when the NPS fee process nationwide allowed parks to keep most of the fee funds that they collected. Like many parks throughout the nation, with the encouragement of Congress and DOI, the park opted to charge an entrance fee. Beginning on April 1, 1987, adults were charged one dollar for the tours. This tour fee, together with charges for Golden Eagle passports which provides access to multiple parks, yielded \$21,507 which provided funds for a Park Ranger to begin leading walking tours of the Truman neighborhood and for additional exhibits and murals in the visitor center auditorium.⁵⁵⁵ Throughout the 1980s, NPS was actively involved with Congress, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), and the General Accounting Office (GAO) in a complex series of negotiations regarding the appropriate level of entrance and user fees to charge throughout the National Park System, where these fees would be held, and the impact of these fees on base budget allocations. The collection of fees at NPS sites was an issue of several decades' standing. The approach to fee collection changed in 1965 when NPS user fees were earmarked for the Land and Water Conservation Fund, rather than directly for NPS. In the 1970s, though, user fees went back to the NPS for allocation to the individual parks.⁵⁵⁶ Funds that remained with the park were not required to be spent in any given year; the park had the option of spending these "No-Year" funds at the time or banking them for more expensive projects. In 1996, the House Interior Appropriations Committee in Congress included a provision for a Recreational Fee Demonstration (Fee Demo) program, designed to be temporary in the omnibus appropriations act. This program allowed NPS, along with US Fish and Wildlife Service, Bureau of Land Management, US Forest Service, and US Department of Agriculture, to charge recreation user fees at their respective units, with each bureau retaining the revenues collected, eighty percent

⁵⁵³ Memorandum, Superintendent, Harry S Truman to Regional Director, MWRO, November 27, 1984; files of Harry S Truman NHS, H14.

⁵⁵⁴ Annual Superintendent's Report for 1986; see also Memorandum, Superintendent, Harry S Truman to Division Chiefs, Harry S Truman, September 27, 1985; files of Harry S Truman NHS, F34.

⁵⁵⁵ Annual Superintendent's Report for 1987; files of Harry S Truman NHS.

⁵⁵⁶ Barry Mackintosh, *Visitor Fees in the National Park System: A Legislative and Administrative History* (Washington, DC: History Division, National Park Service, 1983); available online: https://www.nps.gov/parkhistory/online_books/mackintosh3/index.htm.

remained at the collecting unit, and the remaining twenty percent was returned to the parent agency.

According to the annual reports by Superintendent Reigle, the park's base ONPS budget allocation rose steadily, if not precipitously, through the late 1980s, reaching \$408,700 by 1988. In 1988, also, the park received additional funding for artifact cataloging and to begin furnishing the new offsite collections facility. In 1989, the park's base ONPS allocation was reduced to \$385,625 but received an additional \$60,000 through Cultural Cyclical funds, \$34,400 from the Fee Program, and a small amount for the Volunteers in Parks program. A portion of the Cultural Cyclical funds had been carried over from 1988, when the park returned \$39,500 that had been designated for re-roofing the Truman Home, repairing the foundation, and completing the Cultural Landscape Report that could not be completed in that year.⁵⁵⁷

The addition of the George Wallace, Frank Wallace, and Noland Homes to the park allowed for a greater measure of protection and interpretive potential for the Truman Home but also put an additional strain on the park's budget. The base budget moved up in 1992 to \$542,900, but stayed nearly flat at \$549,000 in 1993. These increases were not enough to develop and maintain the three new properties, including general maintenance and basic utility costs. The Frank Wallace Home was approved as park housing by the Washington, D.C., office of NPS in 1992, which made it available for Housing Initiative funds, but those were competitive funds subject to availability. In addition to funding, staffing was limited. By 1993, the FTE allocation for the park was 17.0, but the park exceeded that by one position in order to complete specific projects. Overall, however, the park's "most significant concerns affecting the historic site [were] the lack of funding, personnel and equipment for projects, and the acquisition of buildings and lands without the funds to staff, develop and maintain these resources." In particular, the Superintendent's report for 1993 pointed out the shortage of maintenance staff and equipment to maintain what was then eleven buildings and six acres; the curatorial staff was one member under the level needed to maintain accountability for the collections; the Interpretation Division was unable to develop off-site school programs; and the addition of the new properties highlighted the need for a staff Historian.⁵⁵⁸

Finally, in 1995, following the acquisition of the Truman Farm, the park received an additional \$232,000 in base funding and an additional allocation of 4.0 FTE. MWRO also provided special funding in FY95, including \$7,000 for asbestos removal at the George Wallace Home, \$50,000 for structural investigations at the Truman Home, and \$15,000 for cataloging. The Fee Collection program provided \$73,000, and the park received additional funds for the reproduction of curtains in the kitchen, pantry, and butler's pantry in the Truman Home and to finalize the Truman Home's structural investigations. The State of Missouri provided \$2,425 through the Missouri Department of Tourism to be spent on the Truman Farm. A new organizational chart for the park was

⁵⁵⁷ Memorandum, Superintendent, Harry S Truman to Associate Regional Director, Planning and Resource Preservation; files of Harry S Truman NHS, D24.

⁵⁵⁸ Annual Superintendent's Report for 1993; files of Harry S Truman NHS.

authorized, which included eighteen full-time permanent staff, seven term positions, and five seasonal positions.⁵⁵⁹

In the mid- and late 1990s, park superintendents had a range of potential NPS funding sources for specific projects in addition to the ONPS base allocation which covered salaries, benefits and standard office operating costs. The special funding sources included the cultural resources preservation program (CRPP), cultural cyclic maintenance, backlog cataloging program, repair/rehabilitation program, regular cyclic maintenance, and others. Securing the necessary funds for the various projects at the Independence Unit and Grandview Unit, with their mix of needs including studies, repair and rehabilitation, maintenance, capital upgrades, planning documents, and cataloging, required careful balancing. Funds for special projects were competitive within MWRO. The park's division chiefs entered proposed projects and their rationales into the Project Management Information System (PMIS) which the park's management team then prioritized and forwarded to the Region. Proposed projects were then reviewed by committees at the Regional level and approved or denied, a system that remains in place.⁵⁶⁰

At times through the late 1990s and into the 2000s, the park fared better with funding for special projects than with the ONPS base and FTE allocation, the decline of which brought the site to a critical stage. As former Administrative Officer Joanne Six recalled, "Although Harry S Truman received base increases from 1999 to 2004, it was not adequate to keep up with personnel benefits, cost of living increases, assessments—which are Congressional unfunded programs—permanent change of station moves, daily park operating needs, and purchasing IT [information technology] equipment. . . . The park survived the past year by relying on lapsed permanent positions and reduction in grades of permanent positions." During this same five-year period, as Six recalled, the park's staff was reduced from eighteen, with three temporary positions, to sixteen with one temporary position; the FTE allocation, meanwhile, dropped from 21.23 in 1999 to 17.18 in 2004.⁵⁶¹ In his annual report for 2004, Superintendent James Sanders observed that "This fiscal year was the most financially challenging in my 35-year career with the National Park Service. We actually had to consider closing the park for two days each week after the park's management team made drastic cuts in the park's ONPS base budget." Implemented cost-cutting measures included reducing the number of telephone lines for which the park paid, increasing energy conservation measures in all buildings, leaving lapsed positions unfilled or filled with part-time staff, returning one of the GSA vehicles, consolidating garbage dumpsters, cancelling Sunday tours at the Truman Farm to conserve staff, and using accumulated housing funds to pay utilities on the Frank Wallace Home while the law enforcement Ranger position remained unfilled. At the same time, GSA announced that it was unable to pay the lease for the park's maintenance shop. The Midwest Regional Office agreed to pay half of the lease, which totaled \$44,000, leaving the park to pay the remainder. Later in the year, MWRO increased the

⁵⁵⁹ Annual Superintendent's Report for 1995; files of Harry S Truman NHS.

⁵⁶⁰ Joanne Six, oral history interview, March 22, 2016.

⁵⁶¹ *Ibid.*; see also "Steps Taken to Reduce Fixed Costs—Summary (1999-2004)," files of Harry S Truman NHS, F34.

park's base budget by \$10,000, allowing the Superintendent to hire a full-time interpretive seasonal guide and enabling the park to keep the Independence Unit open seven days per week, but it remained "the tightest budget that the park had ever experienced." Funds from other cyclic, housing, repair/rehabilitation, volunteer in the parks, and CRPP sources totaled \$324,646, Sanders noted, which allowed the staff "to achieve the largest number of projects and the protection/improvement of the largest number of resources, for a given year, in the history of the park. That says a great deal about the quality of the staff."⁵⁶²

Superintendent Sanders transferred to Lincoln Home NHS in Illinois, in August 2005, and his replacement, Larry Villalva, did not enter on duty until March 2006. In the meantime, Curator Carol Dage became Acting Superintendent. The fiscal challenges continued throughout 2005: in addition to the Superintendent position, several others remained lapsed including Historian (GS-9), Interpretive/Security Park Ranger (GS-9), Museum Technician (GS-9), and Facility Manager (GS-9). In 2006, the park staff dropped to twelve full-time and eight part-time personnel, clearly a skeleton crew given the requirements of tours, collections management, and maintenance of both the Independence and Grandview Units. Although four permanent staff were added in 2007, ONPS base allocations remained largely stagnant. In early 2009, the park was alerted that congressionally-appropriated base budgets would remain flat for the next three to five years. In response, park staff took part in a Critical Operations Study to define the problem and work toward solutions.

The resulting Critical Operations Report (COR), completed in 2009, painted a dire picture of the park's situation.⁵⁶³ In the process of the study, park staff defined the basic functions necessary "to achieve the park's purposes and priorities, and which cannot be stopped without adversely affecting the resources or the public's uses of the park." These basic functions were then translated into FTE allocations for each of the four divisions: Administration, Interpretation and Visitor Services, Facility Operations and Maintenance, and Cultural Resources, together with the Superintendent's office. The staffing level needed to complete the essential functions totaled 23.0 permanent and 3.5 seasonal FTE. From a low of 11.39 permanent FTE in 2006, the level in 2009 rose only to 15.06 permanent FTE and 1.93 seasonal.

After demonstrating the significant difference between the minimum staff necessary for critical operations and the then-current status, the COR then went on to detail the measures taken in recent years to reduce fixed personnel costs and other operational expenses. In the Administration division, for example, the Administrative Technician (GS-7) retired in late 2002; the budget had not allowed for a full-time replacement, so the park re-hired the former Administrative Technician as an annuitant on limited hours, extended through 2004, but the position went unfilled in 2005 and 2006. Reclassified to include IT support functions, the position was filled in 2007 at GS-

⁵⁶² Annual Superintendent's Report for 2004; files of Harry S Truman NHS. Chapter 5 provides a description from Superintendent Sanders as to his methods for securing these funds.

⁵⁶³ *Harry S Truman National Historic Site: Critical Operations Report*, November 2, 2009; files of Harry S Truman NHS.

6/7 level, with time divided between IT and administrative clerical duties. At the same time, the COR noted, many administrative functions were transferred to the parks from regional and Washington offices, placing a greater need for administrative clerical time. Within the Interpretation and Visitor Services division, the earlier staffing level previously consisted of four GS-9 permanent Park Rangers and one GS-9 Law Enforcement Ranger. In the early 2000s, the 2009 COR reported, the GS-9 Park Ranger positions were filled, when vacated, with GS-4/5 Park Guides, and the Law Enforcement position was rewritten as an Education Specialist, leaving law enforcement to the local Independence Police Department. The Education Specialist position, however, was never filled. The Facility Operations and Maintenance division was operating with a Woodcrafter (WG-9) and a Maintenance Worker Pest Control (WG-6), while the permanent WG-5 Maintenance Workers had been replaced with a seasonal WG-3 Maintenance Worker at a time when requirements for documenting necessary maintenance projects through the Facility Management Software System (FMSS), introduced in 2003, had become heavier for the division. In the Cultural Resources division, the position of Historian (GS-9) had been lapsed since 1998, with research functions, including responding to public queries, documentation of the collections, and the oral history program shifted to the two Museum Technician positions. In addition, MWRO had established the Independence Multi-Park Facility in 2010 in another leased space in the offsite storage facility, for which the division staff was responsible without funding for additional FTE.

These cuts in staff and increases in responsibilities had significant consequences to the core mission of the park, according to the COR. The Cultural Resources division, for example, did not have the time to analyze the environmental monitoring data in the Truman Home and other facilities, provide essential research functions, carry out public outreach, or prepare thorough and, therefore, competitive, project proposals. The Interpretation division, meanwhile, was developing no curriculum-based educational programming or cooperative projects despite being the only NPS facility in the greater Kansas City area, and the tours had not been subject to updating. Perhaps of greater significance, the Maintenance division was working without a Chief at a time when the park was conducting the most aggressive repair and rehabilitation projects in the park's history, including the installation of a new HVAC and fire suppression system together with historic plaster and wallpaper repair in the Truman Home, with the reconstruction of the Frank Wallace Home and Noland Home foundations recently completed and the million-dollar renovation of the Noland Home set to begin the next year.

The 2009 COR presented a grim picture of the park's status, and its forecast of little relief for the following three to five years largely came true. The federal government sequester in 2013 was only one of several factors that created severe challenges for the park between 2012 and 2015. Superintendent Villalva resigned abruptly in 2014. The Chief of Cultural Resources, Carol Dage, was then appointed Acting Superintendent. In 2014, according to Dage,

we went down to a level that I have never, ever, seen. We were down to ten people. And I have never seen that. And because I was the Acting Superintendent,

we really didn't have any opportunities to hire people. And it—I just have to tell you, it was—it was very desperate. . . .the Chief of Interpretation position was vacant. The Chief of Administration was vacant. I was Acting [Superintendent], and so. . .the next person under me, Kristen [Stalling], the Museum Curator, had to take over my position. And the Chief of Maintenance was vacant. . . .So that meant, then, that, when I became the Acting, we had Actings. And everybody was Acting.

Beginning in 2015, however, the staffing situation showed signs of improving, as Dage was promoted to Superintendent and was able to hire an Administrative Officer, Diana Merrill, while former Chief of Maintenance Greg Wolcott, who had transferred to Fort Scott NHS, returned to his position in October 2015, and authorization was given to hire a Chief of Interpretation.⁵⁶⁴

Promotion

Tours of the Harry S Truman NHS proved immensely popular with tourists from the time of its opening. Because of the strict limitations on the size of tours through the home, visitation clearly has an upper limit, though the park offers additional interpretive opportunities beyond the Truman Home itself including the video program in the visitor center, walking tours of Independence, and school and other outreach programs when the budget allows. From the beginning, the park relied for promotion primarily on its unique nature as the home where Truman and his wife lived in small-town Middle America and as the only National Park System unit in the Kansas City metropolitan area. Promotional materials were limited to brochures distributed in various travel and tourism sites in the region. In the early 2000s, however, the park began to develop a presence on the internet with establishment of a web site. By 2000, the park's web site contained thirteen pages grouped into five general categories: home, travel basics, activities, facilities, and fees/permits. The site contained only limited information about the park: a brief historical background of the home, travel directions and hours, and the park's role in the several NPS multi-park access programs including Golden Eagle, Golden Access, and Golden Age passes.

In late 2001 and 2002, however, the park began a substantial expansion of the web site, led largely by Museum Technician Michael Hosking. The goal of the expanded web site was to provide additional information about the park beyond simply information about visiting it. In late December 2001, Hosking incorporated scans of the slide show images, the script of the neighborhood walking tour, and education materials, for a significantly revamped web site that debuted in 2002. In 2003, Hosking again updated the site with scanned versions of several of the park's planning documents, including the GMP and the LRIP, among others, and solicited input from other park staff for photographs and program information. By April 2003, the web site was averaging 300 "hits" per day. Beginning in 2004, following on the project to convert the oral history

⁵⁶⁴ Carol Dage, oral history interview, January 7, 2016. Additional information on staffing issues can be found later in this chapter.

taped interviews to digital audio files, the web site began including transcripts from the interviews for public access. In 2007-2008, the new NPS Content Management System (CMS) was introduced as a way of standardizing park web sites. Kristen Stalling transferred the existing park web pages to the new system and expanded the online exhibits of museum collections, planning documents and oral history offerings. The web site currently has electronic versions of many of the oral history interviews and a wider range of planning documents available for viewing.⁵⁶⁵

In recent years the park has expanded further into social media. In 2011, Matt Turner was hired as a Park Guide. In addition to his ranger duties, he created the park Facebook page, as well as Twitter and Instagram accounts and a YouTube channel. The social media platforms that Turner created brought increased recognition to the park as a leader in the NPS in reaching audiences in new ways, occasionally posting links with Truman-related information together with NPS and park-specific promotional materials. The Instagram account, begun in November 2013, features images of the home, details from the collection, and, frequently, light-hearted, edited images of Truman, often seasonal in nature; the park's Instagram account currently has more than 6,000 followers.

Truman Family

Harry and Bess Truman had only one child, their daughter Margaret. Christened Mary Margaret Truman, she was born on February 17, 1924, at her parents' home in Independence. Margaret lived in Independence on a full-time basis only until she was ten years old. Harry Truman was elected to the United States Senate in 1934, and from 1935 to 1942 she, with her mother, divided her time between Independence and Washington, DC. Each year while in middle and high schools, she attended public schools in Independence during the fall, and Gunston Hall, a private school for girls, in the spring. After finishing high school in 1942, Margaret matriculated at George Washington University in Washington, DC and received her Bachelor of Arts degree in 1946. She then embarked on a singing career, having studied voice since 1940, and made her concert debut on a national radio broadcast in March 1947. She signed a contract with NBC in February 1951, performing regularly and hosting several radio and television programs through the mid-1960s. Margaret also took up a career as an author, publishing many murder mysteries, many of them set in Washington, DC, as well as a biography of her father in 1973.

Margaret met Clifton Daniel in 1955, when he served as the foreign news editor of the *New York Times*. They were married on April 21, 1956 in Independence. Except for a four-year period in the 1970s, the couple lived in New York City. The Daniels had four children: Clifton Truman (b. 1957), William Wallace (b. 1959, d. 2000), Harrison

⁵⁶⁵ A printed version of the park's web pages from February 12, 2001 is available in the files of Harry S Truman NHS. Occasional emails also address the development of the park's website, including Michael Hosking to Karen Tinnin, December 6, 2001; Michael Hosking to James Sanders, January 28, 2003; James Sanders to Michael Hosking, April 11, 2003; Michael Hosking to Alan Stewart et al, April 18, 2003. See also Annual Superintendent's Reports for 2002, 2003, 2004.

Gates (b. 1963), and Thomas Washington (b. 1966). Clifton Daniel died at home in New York City in 2000. Margaret Truman Daniel died in 2008. They were both cremated and their ashes interned opposite her parents' gravesite in the courtyard of the Truman Library.

Although she lived in Independence only occasionally after her father was elected to the Senate in 1934, Margaret Truman Daniel provided invaluable assistance to NPS staff after the home became a National Historic Site. As recounted elsewhere in this Administrative History, she provided important insights for the guided tour of the home and willingly sat for an oral history interview with Historian Ron Cockrell. She also provided extensive information about many of the items in the home, both in a formal interview with Historic Furnishings Specialist Sarah Olson in 1983 and informally with park staff for years afterward. She continued to visit the home throughout the rest of her life, often with visiting dignitaries. Following her death in 2008, park staff developed an even closer working relationship with her eldest son, Clifton Truman Daniel. Mr. Daniel has visited the park several times, including in 2015 for the official opening of the Noland Home exhibits.

Staffing

The Harry S Truman NHS has been ably served by a range of professionals in several fields. From an initial staff of one Ranger-in-Charge in 1983, the park saw a rapid deployment of staff to ready the home for its opening in 1984. In subsequent years, however, the park occasionally had only marginally sufficient staff to conduct essential functions. Even through these difficult times, particularly in the mid-2000s and again from 2012 to 2015, a core of key staff members, often supported by dedicated volunteers, preserved the park intact and provided a measure of continuity. Unlike some parks, the Harry S Truman NHS has both a rush of tours during the summer season and a steady flow of visitors during the fall, winter, and spring. As a result, the park has long relied on a mix of permanent employees, both full-time and part-time, and seasonal employees who serve primarily as guides for either the Truman Home or the Truman Farm during the summer season. The balance among these staff categories varied widely, and strategically, as superintendents and division chiefs sought to operate the park within widely varying budget conditions and FTE allocations.

Thomas P. Richter was the first staff member at the site, entering on duty as Ranger-in-Charge on January 23, 1983, several months before Congress passed the park's enabling legislation. Richter's task was to initiate planning for the site, to coordinate and establish close relations with the City of Independence, and to begin developing both an interpretive and a curatorial program for the site. In the absence of other NPS staff at the site, Richter most often coordinated his work with Regional Director J.L. Dunning and Deputy Regional Director Randall Pope, together with other Regional Staff: Director of Cultural Resources Andy Ketterson, Associate Director for Planning and Resource Protection John Kawamoto, Regional Curator John Hunter, and Regional Chief of Interpretation, James Schaack. Regional Chief Ranger Tommy

Thompson provided Richter with invaluable advice and direction on law enforcement matters. In addition, Richter's supervisor, Jefferson National Expansion Memorial Superintendent Jerry Shober provided wise counsel and direction during this formative period. On October 2, 1983, Norman J. Reigle entered on duty as the inaugural Superintendent of Harry S Truman NHS, at which point Richter became the park's Chief Ranger.

Reigle's marching orders were to develop the park's management structure, including the organizational framework and initial staffing, and to prepare the site for its public opening in May 1984. His task included identifying and securing space for visitor contact and ticketing and a headquarters office, which initially were to be in two separate buildings. He also worked to solidify the relationships with the City of Independence, the Truman Library, and other public and private entities in and around Independence. Reigle also was charged with developing staff. In addition to Richter, who was already a staff member when Reigle arrived, Reigle hired Joan L. Sanders as Administrative Technician, who entered on duty on November 27, 1983. Sanders served in that capacity until August 1990. In addition, Reigle arranged for Susan Kopczynski to serve as temporary Curator on detail from Morristown National Historical Park, New Jersey, which lasted from November 27, 1983 until February 29, 1984. Reigle also arranged for Steve Harrison to serve on a brief detail from Jefferson National Expansion Memorial, Missouri to provide the first professional cleaning of the Truman Home in November 1983 in preparation for the filming of a television special in which Margaret Truman Daniel provided a tour of the home. Harrison then entered on duty as the park's first Chief of Cultural Resources on February 19, 1984, serving until January 1989.

With Harrison on staff in early 1984, Reigle began working on hiring the staff that would be needed for the home's opening that spring. His staffing structure was approved by MWRO in January 1984, and, as a result, Richter's title was changed from Chief Ranger to Chief of Interpretation and Visitor Services on January 22, 1984. With a nearly overwhelming list of items left to do in order to have the home cleaned and prepared for opening, Reigle hired Lisa Bosso, who entered on duty as Museum Aide on March 4, 1984, to assist Harrison; Bosso remained in that position until 1987. New staff were added quickly between then and the public opening in May. Jennifer Hayes transferred from the U.S. Marine Corps and entered on duty as Secretary on April 1, 1984, and remains on staff as of the writing of this Administrative History. The bulk of the staff then entered on duty on April 15, 1984: Gregory (Skip) Brooks as Facility Management Specialist from Richmond National Battlefield, Virginia; Palma Wilson-Buell as Lead Park Technician, transferred from Ozark National Scenic Riverways, Missouri; and Rick Jones and Cindy Ott as permanent Park Technicians, both transferred from Lava Beds National Monument, California (the two were married in the summer of 1984). The initial hires also included four seasonal Park Technicians: John Whitfield, formerly at Lincoln Home NHS, Illinois; Jody Adkins, formerly at Lincoln Home NHS and Jefferson National Expansion Memorial, Missouri; Karen Tinnin, formerly at



Figure 44. Harry S Truman NHS staff, April 1984. Front Row (L-R): Palma Wilson-Buell, Jody Adkins, Joan Sanders, Norm Reigle. Middle Row (L-R): Lisa Bosso, Linda Joseph, Tom Richter, Karen Tinnin, Jenny Hayes, John Whitfield. Back Row (L-R): Rick Jones, Cindy Ott, Steve Harrison. Photo provided by Steve Harrison.

Jefferson National Expansion Memorial; and Linda Joseph.⁵⁶⁶ Several of the early staff members posed for a group photograph in the new park offices in May 1984 (Figure 44).

Skip Brooks remained as Chief of Maintenance from April 1984 until early 1986, and was replaced by Michael Healy who entered on duty in March 1986. The two permanent Park Technicians, Rick Jones and Cindy Ott-Jones, left in September 1986, and the park shifted its emphasis for providing tours to seasonal employees. At the same time, the operational structure of the Interpretation and Visitor Services Division was reorganized, with Palma Wilson-Buell assuming responsibility for Truman Home operations, law enforcement, and physical security, and Karen Tinnin, formerly a seasonal guide, assuming responsibility for the ticket and information center and for volunteers.⁵⁶⁷ Richter remained as Chief of Interpretation and Visitor Services until November 1987 when he began a four-month detail to Jefferson National Expansion Memorial; Richter was hired into the position of Director of Visitor Services there in January 1988. Palma Wilson-Buell, formerly the Lead Park Ranger, was promoted to serve as Chief of the division in March 1988 to replace Richter. At that point the Lead Ranger position was allowed to lapse. In 1989, Chief of Cultural Resources and Curator Steve Harrison accepted a transfer to the NPS Southeast Regional Office. Following a search through OPM, Carol Dage was hired and entered on duty as Chief of Cultural

⁵⁶⁶ See Joan Sanders, "All for the Love of Harry," a timeline of events from December 1, 1983 until April 30, 1984; files of Harry S Truman NHS, H14. Sanders did not indicate where Linda Joseph had been prior to coming to the park.

⁵⁶⁷ Annual Superintendent's Report for 1986; files of Harry S Truman NHS.

Resources and Curator in July 1989. Dage served in that role until 2015, when she was promoted to Superintendent.

In 1990, the entire senior staff aside from Dage transferred. Superintendent Norm Reigle transferred to Mississippi National River and Recreation Area, Minnesota, in January 1990, and Ronald J. Mack entered on duty as the second Superintendent in May 1990, transferring from Booker T. Washington National Monument, Virginia, where he was Superintendent. Palma Wilson-Buell served as Acting Superintendent before Mack entered on duty, then she transferred to Scotts Bluff National Monument, Nebraska, to serve as Chief Ranger there. She was replaced as Chief of Interpretation and Visitor Services by Ranger Regina Jones-Underwood, who was later replaced by Ranger Karen Tinnin (Figure 45). Joan Sanders, the park's inaugural Administrative Technician, transferred in 1990, and was replaced by Karen L. Mason who entered on duty in October 1990. Finally, Facility Manager Michael Healy transferred in 1990, and was replaced by Michele Cefola who entered on duty in October 1990 (Figure 46). In addition to the senior staff, both Museum Technician Michael Shaver and Museum Aide Steve Floray transferred from the site in 1990. In 1991, Scott Stone entered on duty as Museum Technician, serving until 1997.

Superintendent Mack's tenure, which extended from May 1990 until February 20, 1995, was dominated by the addition of the George Wallace Home, Frank Wallace Home, and Noland Home to the Harry S Truman NHS. While each of the three homes saw only limited repairs and rehabilitation during Mack's term, the period required a great deal of planning and programming for the homes. Mack also became a visible presence in many community and regional organizations, and, during his tenure, the park gained fame within NPS for being the only park in which only women served as division chiefs: Carol Dage as Chief of Cultural Resources and Museum Curator, Karen Tinnin as Chief of Interpretation and Visitor Services, Michele Cefola as Chief of Maintenance, and Karen Mason as Administrative Officer. June Murray entered on duty as Administrative Clerk, and Jerry Kunsman entered on duty as Maintenance Worker, both in 1991.

Park staff remained relatively stable for several years after Superintendent Mack entered on duty. In October 1993, Administrative Officer Karen Mason resigned, and was replaced by Marty Sutherland; the title of the position was changed to Administrative Manager in 1994. In 1994, Jeffrey Wade, who had earlier served as a seasonal Guide at the park, and Valerie Steffen, entered on duty as Park Rangers. Superintendent Ronald Mack transferred from the site in February 1995, and Kenneth Apschnikat entered on duty as Superintendent on March 5, 1995 (Figure 47). Apschnikat was serving as Superintendent of Manassas National Battlefield Park, Virginia, at the time of his appointment to Harry S Truman NHS. One of Apschnikat's principal charges was to incorporate the Truman Farm Home, which Congress had recently added to the park, into the park's planning efforts. This included establishing relations with the City of Grandview and the Friends of the Truman Farm Home, coordinating with Missouri DOT to have highway directional signs installed, and inaugurating tours of the site. Apschnikat also initiated planning to acquire the two parcels immediately south of the Truman Farm



Figure 45. Chief of Interpretation and Visitor Services Karen Tinnin, 1992. Photo provided by Harry S Truman NHS.



Figure 46. Chief of Facilities Management Michele Cefola, 2016. Photo by Deborah Harvey.



Figure 47. Superintendent Ken Apschnikat, 2016. Photo by Deborah Harvey.

Home, one including a modern building programmed for future use as a visitor center. Apschnikat oversaw the revision to the park's GMP and also coordinated with Chief of Maintenance Michele Cefola to lease a separate maintenance shop two blocks from the headquarters office. This space replaced the use of one bay of the Truman Home's garage, which had served as the park's maintenance shop since 1984. During Apschnikat's term, also, planning continued for the Wallace Homes and the Noland Home, and basic, essential maintenance was completed at the Noland Home. The senior staff remained relatively consistent during Apschnikat's tenure; as he recalled, "I was very fortunate to have an extremely competent staff. Had one of the best staffs I've ever worked with as a manager. That makes all the difference in the world. They were supportive. You know, they would work together."⁵⁶⁸

During Apschnikat's tenure, Administrative Manager Marty Sutherland transferred to MWRO and was quickly replaced by Teri Perry, who entered on duty in July 1996. Teresa Valencia entered on duty as Museum Aide in June 1996, and served until 1998. Lewis McKarnin also entered duty in 1997 as a Maintenance worker, and remained on staff until 2014 having been promoted to Woodcrafter in July 2001 (Figure 48). After McKarnin retired in 2014, he became a volunteer woodcrafter for the park and continues to serve in that capacity as of the writing of this Administrative History. The park's only full-time permanent Historian, Jon Taylor, also served under Superintendent Apschnikat. Taylor entered on duty in March 1993, and served until 1997, when he resigned to begin graduate school. Administrative Manager Teri Perry transferred to another park in March 1997, and was immediately replaced by Lawrence Sandarciero.

⁵⁶⁸ Kenneth Apschnikat, oral history interview, February 29, 2016.

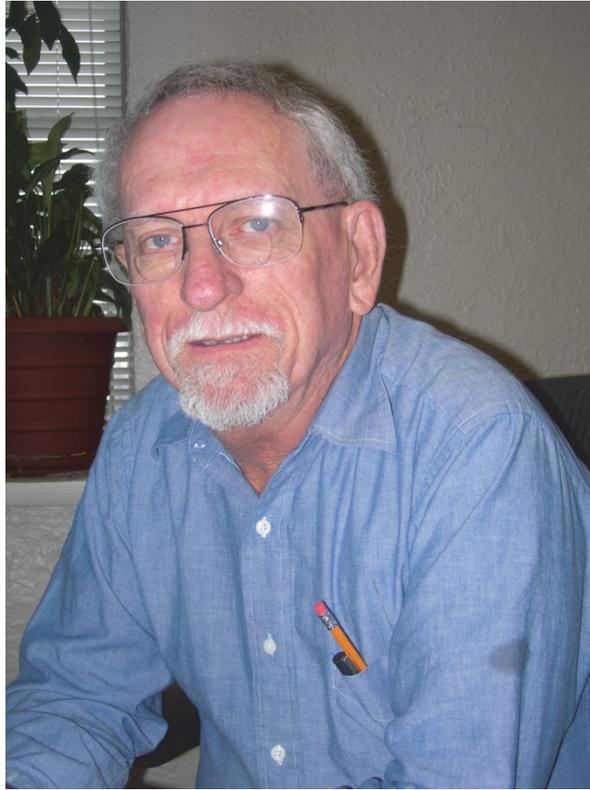


Figure 48. Woodcrafter Lewis McKarnin, 2016. Photo by Deborah Harvey.

Superintendent Apschnikat transferred to Abraham Lincoln Birthplace National Historical Park, Kentucky, in January 1999. He was replaced by James A. Sanders, who had served as Assistant Superintendent at Voyageurs National Park, Minnesota, from 1993 to 1999; prior to his work at Voyageurs, Sanders served as Superintendent of Biscayne National Park, Florida, when the devastating Hurricane Andrew struck south Florida in 1992 (Figure 49). Sanders entered on duty at Harry S Truman in June 1999, and served there until August 2005. Sanders' term as Superintendent was challenging given the deterioration in the park's budget from 1999 to 2004, at the same time that the park needed to conduct extensive repair and rehabilitation work to the Truman Home and both Wallace Homes. Sanders deftly secured funds from a wide variety of sources to keep the repair and rehabilitation work progressing. At the same time, he was more active than most park Superintendents with the City of Independence. Sanders spearheaded the significant expansion of the Harry S Truman Historic District NHL in coordination with Rachel Franklin-Weekley at MWRO and worked closely with the City of Independence and Jackson County on restoration of the historic Jackson County Courthouse.

After the relative stability of the park's staff during the 1990s, Sanders' time proved more fluid. Chief of Maintenance Michele Cefola resigned from the park, and from federal service, in April 2000. During her tenure, Cefola had made strides to develop a full maintenance staff of three with the capacity to conduct substantial repair



Figure 49. Superintendent James Sanders, 2016. Photo by Deborah Harvey.



Figure 50. Administrative Officer Joanne Six, 2016. Photo by Deborah Harvey.

and rehabilitation projects in-house in addition to everyday maintenance functions at the Independence and Grandview Units. Prior to her arrival, the Maintenance Division performed their work with only the Chief of Maintenance and one Maintenance Worker, which proved unsupportable with the additional properties in Independence and Grandview. The work of the Division included landscape maintenance and routine repairs. Cefola also worked with Apschnikat to locate and secure a separate maintenance facility. Cefola was replaced by Thomas (Joe) Cannon, who entered on duty in December 2000. Administrative Officer Lawrence Sandarciero transferred to another park in October 1999 and was replaced by Joanne M. Six, who entered on duty in May 2000 (Figure 50). Six had worked at the Bureau of Labor Statistics in Kansas City since 1975 before being selected for the position at Harry S Truman NHS; she remained at the park until 2011. In the Cultural Resources division, Kristen Stalling entered on duty as a Museum Aide in 2000, first on a seasonal assignment and then made permanent in July 2001; she currently serves as Museum Curator and was appointed to the Chief of Cultural Resources position in 2016. By 2005, many positions remained vacant, including Interpretive/Security Park Ranger, Museum Technician, Chief of Maintenance, and Historian.

Sanders transferred to the Lincoln Home NHS, Illinois, in August 2005, though he remained actively involved with the NHL historic district expansion. In 2006, Superintendent Larry Villalva entered on duty. Shortly after Villalva arrived, long-time Chief of Interpretation and Visitor Services Karen Tinnin retired from NPS, after serving at the park since 1984. She was replaced by Eileen Andes, who entered on duty in September 2007 and remained until 2011, when she transferred to Theodore Roosevelt National Park, North Dakota, as Chief of Interpretation. Chief of Maintenance Joe Cannon left the park in July 2005, and was replaced by Alan Dinehart, who entered on duty in 2006. Dinehart then left the park in 2009, and was replaced the same year by Gregory Wolcott. Villalva's term, which extended until 2014, included the most extensive rehabilitation and repair work to date at the Independence Unit, including HVAC and alarm system installation and plaster and wallpaper conservation at the Truman Home in 2009 to 2010, and the complete restoration of the Noland Home and installation of new exhibits there from 2011 to 2013. During this time, also, NPS approved the extension of the Harry S Truman Historic District NHL, after more than a decade of study and deliberation.

Unfortunately, successful though these efforts were, Villalva's term was marked by challenges in management, including a lack of communication between the division chiefs. An indication of this management approach was noted in Villalva's annual report for 2007, in which he noted that he "held a total of two meetings with all employees in FY 07. Instead of meeting with the entire staff at once, Villalva met with staff from each division to outline the significant accomplishments to date for the park, and to project projects for the remainder of the year."⁵⁶⁹ Villalva's approach to communicating directly with divisions rather than encouraging inter-divisional communication continued through his tenure. Staff morale declined, particularly given the increasingly challenging budget and staffing situation described earlier in this chapter. By 2014, when Villalva resigned

⁵⁶⁹ Annual Superintendent's Report for 2007; files of Harry S Truman NHS.

abruptly, only Chief of Cultural Resources Carol Dage remained as division chief; all others had resigned and not been replaced.

Dage was appointed Acting Superintendent in 2014, and entered on duty as Superintendent in July 2015. Since that time, she has worked to rebuild the staff, including bringing former Chief of Maintenance Greg Wolcott, who had transferred to Fort Scott National Historic Site, Kansas, back to Harry S Truman NHS in his former position and promoting former Administrative Technician Diana Merrill to Administrative Officer. At the time of this Administrative History, the Chief of Interpretation and Visitor Services was approved to be hired. After a period of such dramatic change, in both personnel and renovations to the park, the continuity which Dage represents, serving as Chief of Cultural Resources under all five of her predecessors as Superintendent, bodes well for the protection and public use and enjoyment of Harry and Bess Truman's legacy in their hometown.

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Note on Sources

This Administrative History of the Harry S Truman NHS relied primarily on records found in the park's files, located in the Headquarters Office in Independence, Missouri. The park's files are particularly well organized, and nearly all of the citations in footnotes refer to an organizational system that has been in place since 1984. Research for this Administrative History also included equally well-organized records in the MWRO Division of Cultural Resources Archive in Omaha, Nebraska. While some of the records were duplicated in the park's files, this collection contained many items of correspondence that were not copied to the park, and which proved invaluable.

In addition to the files that are part of this organizational system, however, additional collections were brought to the Headquarters Office in preparation for this Administrative History. Of particular use were the working files of Historical Architect Al O'Bright, who has been actively involved in nearly all of the rehabilitation projects at the park since 1984. His files, while not organized in accordance with the park's filing system, are, nonetheless, an invaluable resource. In addition, files of the Truman Farm Home Foundation were brought to the park's Headquarters Office in preparation for this Administrative History, and likewise were rich in information for this study.

The Harry S Truman NHS is fortunate to have a rich collection of oral history interviews that have been carried out since Historian Ron Cockrell first interviewed Margaret Truman Daniel in November 1983. While the early oral history interviews focused on those who could provide information and insights about the Trumans and how they lived in their home, attention was quickly given also to those NPS officials who were involved in the early development of the park. These interviews, together with the new oral history interviews conducted for this study, provided an enormous amount of information and perspectives that would otherwise have been lost, and have greatly enriched this Administrative History.

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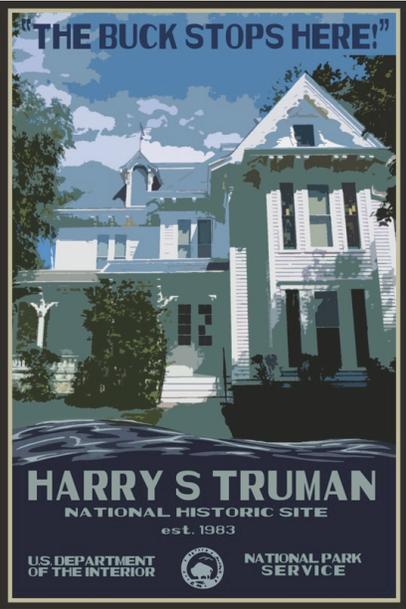
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Appendix A: Harry S Truman NHS Legislation



Public Law 98-32
98th Congress

An Act

To establish the Harry S Truman National Historic Site in the State of Missouri, and for other purposes.

May 23, 1983

[S. 287]

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That, in order to preserve and interpret for the inspiration and benefit of present and future generations the former home of Harry S Truman, thirty-third President of the United States, the Secretary of the Interior (hereinafter referred to as the "Secretary") is authorized to acquire by donation, purchase with donated or appropriated funds, transfer from another Federal agency, or otherwise, the residence and real property known as 219 North Delaware Street in the city of Independence, Missouri, as passed to Bess Wallace Truman upon the death of her husband. The Secretary may also acquire, by any of the above means, fixtures, and personal property for use in connection with the residence.

Harry S Truman
National
Historic Site,
establishment.

SEC. 2. The property acquired pursuant to subsection (a) is designated as the Harry S Truman National Historic Site and shall be administered by the Secretary in accordance with the provisions of law generally applicable to units of the national park system, including the Act entitled "An Act to establish a National Park Service, and for other purposes", approved August 25, 1916 (39 Stat. 535; 16 U.S.C. 1-4), and the Act of August 21, 1935 (49 Stat. 666; 16 U.S.C. 461-467). The Secretary is further authorized, in the administration of the site, to make available certain portions thereof for the use of Margaret Truman Daniel subject to reasonable terms and conditions which he may impose.

16 USC 461 note.

SEC. 3. There is authorized to be appropriated such sums as may be necessary to carry out the provisions of this Act.

Appropriation
authorization.

Approved May 23, 1983.

LEGISLATIVE HISTORY—S. 287:

CONGRESSIONAL RECORD, Vol. 129 (1983):
May 6, considered and passed Senate.
May 10, considered and passed House.

CHAPTER IV

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

FISH AND WILDLIFE AND PARKS

UNITED STATES FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

For an additional amount for "Resource management", \$500,000.

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

OPERATION OF THE NATIONAL PARK SYSTEM

96 Stat. 1970.

Funds appropriated to the National Park Service under this head in Public Law 97-394 shall be available to reimburse the Estate of Bess W. Truman for operation expenses, including maintenance and protection, of the Harry S Truman National Historic Site incurred during the period October 18, 1982 through December 27, 1982.

CONSTRUCTION

Notwithstanding any other provision of law, section 4 of the Act of October 26, 1972, as amended (86 Stat. 1181; 16 U.S.C. 433c note), is amended by striking the numeral "9,327,000" and inserting in lieu thereof "10,500,000".

LAND ACQUISITION AND STATE ASSISTANCE

For an additional amount for "Land acquisition and State assistance", \$25,500,000, to be derived from the Land and Water Conservation Fund and to remain available until expended.

OFFICE OF SURFACE MINING RECLAMATION AND ENFORCEMENT

ABANDONED MINE RECLAMATION FUND

For an additional amount for "Abandoned Mine Reclamation Fund", \$42,000,000, to remain available until expended, to be derived from receipts of the Abandoned Mine Reclamation Fund to provide for the acquisition of private homes and businesses and nonprofit buildings occupied or utilized continuously since September 1, 1983, and the lands on which they are located, excluding all mineral interests, and the relocation of families and individuals residing in the Borough of Centralia and the Village of Byrnesville and on outlying properties who are threatened by the progressive movement of the mine fire currently burning in and around the Borough of Centralia: *Provided*, That all acquisitions made by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania under the authority provided herein shall be at fair market value without regard to mine fire related damages as was properly done by OSM in its prior acquisitions of Centralia properties. These activities must comply with the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970 (42 U.S.C. 4601, et seq.), but shall not constitute a major action within the meaning of section 102(2)(c) of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4332): *Provided further*,

Public Law 101-105
101st Congress

An Act

To provide for the addition of certain parcels to the Harry S Truman National Historic Site in the State of Missouri.

Oct. 2, 1989
[H.R. 419]

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. PROPERTY ACQUISITION.

(a) NOLAND/HAUKENBERRY HOUSE AND WALLACE HOMES.—The first section of the Act entitled “An Act to establish the Harry S Truman National Historic Site in the State of Missouri, and for other purposes”, approved May 23, 1983 (97 Stat. 193), is amended—

16 USC 461 note.

(1) by striking “That,” and inserting “That (a)”; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

“(b)(1) The Secretary is further authorized to acquire by any means set forth in subsection (a) the real properties commonly referred to as—

“(A) the Noland/Haukenberry house and associated lands on Delaware Street in the city of Independence, Missouri, and

“(B) the Frank G. Wallace house and the George P. Wallace house, and associated lands, both on Truman Road in the city of Independence, Missouri.

“(2) The owners of property referred to in paragraph (1) on the date of its acquisition by the Secretary may, as a condition to such acquisition, retain the right of use and occupancy of the improved property for a term of up to and including 25 years or, in lieu thereof, for a term ending at the death of the owner or the spouse of the owner, whichever is later. The owner shall elect the term to be reserved.

“(3) Unless a property acquired pursuant to this subsection is wholly or partially donated to the United States, the Secretary shall pay the owner the fair market value of the property on the date of acquisition less the fair market value, on that date, of the right retained by the owner under paragraph (2).”

(b) TECHNICAL AMENDMENT.—The first sentence of section 2 of such Act is amended by striking “subsection (a)” and inserting “the first section of this Act”.

16 USC 461 note.

97 Stat. 193.

(c) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—Section 3 of such Act is amended—

(1) by inserting before the period at the end thereof “, except for subsection (b) of the first section of this Act”; and

(2) by adding at the end the following: “There is authorized to be appropriated \$250,000 to carry out subsection (b) of the first section of this Act.”.

Approved October 2, 1989.

LEGISLATIVE HISTORY—H.R. 419:

HOUSE REPORTS: No. 101-19 (Comm. on Interior and Insular Affairs).

SENATE REPORTS: No. 101-114 (Comm. on Energy and Natural Resources).

CONGRESSIONAL RECORD, Vol. 135 (1989):

Apr. 11, considered and passed House.

Sept. 12, considered and passed Senate.

Public Law 103-184
103d Congress

An Act

To provide for the addition of the Truman Farm Home to the Harry S Truman National Historic Site in the State of Missouri.

Dec. 14, 1993
[H.R. 486]

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. PROPERTY ACQUISITION

The first section of the Act entitled "An Act to establish the Harry S Truman National Historic Site in the State of Missouri, and for other purposes", approved May 23, 1983 (97 Stat. 193), is amended by adding at the end the following:

16 USC 461 note.

"(c) The Secretary is further authorized to acquire from Jackson County, Missouri, by donation, the real property commonly referred to as the Truman Farm Home located in Grandview, Jackson County, Missouri, together with associated lands and related structures, comprising approximately 5.2 acres.

"(d) The Secretary is authorized and directed to provide appropriate political subdivisions of the State of Missouri with technical and planning assistance for the development and implementation of plans, programs, regulations, or other means for minimizing the adverse effects on the Truman Farm House of the development and use of adjacent lands."

Approved December 14, 1993.

LEGISLATIVE HISTORY—H.R. 486:

HOUSE REPORTS: No. 103-399 (Comm. on Natural Resources).

CONGRESSIONAL RECORD, Vol. 139 (1993):

Nov. 22, considered and passed House.

Nov. 24, considered and passed Senate.

Public Law 103-185
103d Congress

An Act

Dec. 14, 1993
[H.R. 3321]

To provide increased flexibility to States in carrying out the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. INCREASED STATE FLEXIBILITY IN THE LOW-INCOME HOME ENERGY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM.

Section 927 of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1992 (Public Law 102-550) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)—

(A) by striking the parenthetical phrase; and

(B) by inserting before the period “, except as provided in subsection (d)”;

(2) in subsection (b)—

(A) by striking “such” and inserting in lieu thereof “or receiving energy”; and

(B) by inserting before the period “for any program in which eligibility or benefits are based on need, except as provided in subsection (d)”;

(3) by inserting at the end thereof the following new subsection:

“(d) **SPECIAL RULE FOR LOW-INCOME HOME ENERGY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM.**—For purposes of the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program, tenants described in subsection (a)(2) who are responsible for paying some or all heating or cooling costs shall not have their eligibility automatically denied. A State may consider the amount of the heating or cooling component of utility allowances received by tenants described in subsection (a)(2) when setting benefit levels under the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program. The size of any reduction in Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program benefits must be reasonably related to the amount of the heating or cooling component of the utility allowance received and must ensure that the highest level of assistance will be furnished to those households with the lowest incomes and the highest energy costs in relation to income, taking into account family size, in compliance with section 2605(b)(5) of the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Act of 1981 (42 U.S.C. 8624(b)(5)).”

Approved December 14, 1993.

LEGISLATIVE HISTORY—H.R. 3321:

CONGRESSIONAL RECORD, Vol. 139 (1993):

Nov. 15, considered and passed House.

Nov. 22, considered and passed Senate.

42 USC 8624
note.

(1) the national significance of the Shepherdstown battlefield and sites relating to the Shepherdstown battlefield; and

(2) the suitability and feasibility of adding the Shepherdstown battlefield and sites relating to the Shepherdstown battlefield as part of—

(A) Harpers Ferry National Historical Park; or

(B) Antietam National Battlefield.

(b) **CRITERIA.**—In conducting the study authorized under subsection (a), the Secretary shall use the criteria for the study of areas for potential inclusion in the National Park System contained in section 8(c) of Public Law 91-383 (16 U.S.C. 1a-5(c)).

(c) **REPORT.**—Not later than 3 years after the date on which funds are made available to carry out this section, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate and the Committee on Natural Resources of the House of Representatives a report containing the findings, conclusions, and recommendations of the study conducted under subsection (a).

(d) **AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**—There are authorized to be appropriated such sums as are necessary to carry out this section.

SEC. 7206. GREEN MCADOO SCHOOL, TENNESSEE.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—The Secretary of the Interior (referred to in this section as the “Secretary”) shall conduct a special resource study of the site of Green McAdoo School in Clinton, Tennessee, (referred to in this section as the “site”) to evaluate—

(1) the national significance of the site; and

(2) the suitability and feasibility of designating the site as a unit of the National Park System.

(b) **CRITERIA.**—In conducting the study under subsection (a), the Secretary shall use the criteria for the study of areas for potential inclusion in the National Park System under section 8(c) of Public Law 91-383 (16 U.S.C. 1a-5(c)).

(c) **CONTENTS.**—The study authorized by this section shall—

(1) determine the suitability and feasibility of designating the site as a unit of the National Park System;

(2) include cost estimates for any necessary acquisition, development, operation, and maintenance of the site; and

(3) identify alternatives for the management, administration, and protection of the site.

(d) **REPORT.**—Not later than 3 years after the date on which funds are made available to carry out this section, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Natural Resources of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate a report that describes—

(1) the findings and conclusions of the study; and

(2) any recommendations of the Secretary.

SEC. 7207. HARRY S TRUMAN BIRTHPLACE, MISSOURI.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—The Secretary of the Interior (referred to in this section as the “Secretary”) shall conduct a special resource study of the Harry S Truman Birthplace State Historic Site (referred to in this section as the “birthplace site”) in Lamar, Missouri, to determine—

(1) the suitability and feasibility of—

(A) adding the birthplace site to the Harry S Truman National Historic Site; or

(B) designating the birthplace site as a separate unit of the National Park System; and

(2) the methods and means for the protection and interpretation of the birthplace site by the National Park Service, other Federal, State, or local government entities, or private or nonprofit organizations.

(b) **STUDY REQUIREMENTS.**—The Secretary shall conduct the study required under subsection (a) in accordance with section 8(c) of Public Law 91-383 (16 U.S.C. 1a-5(c)).

(c) **REPORT.**—Not later than 3 years after the date on which funds are made available to carry out this section, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Natural Resources of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate a report containing—

(1) the results of the study conducted under subsection (a); and

(2) any recommendations of the Secretary with respect to the birthplace site.

SEC. 7208. BATTLE OF MATEWAN SPECIAL RESOURCE STUDY.

West Virginia.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—The Secretary of the Interior (referred to in this section as the “Secretary”) shall conduct a special resource study of the sites and resources at Matewan, West Virginia, associated with the Battle of Matewan (also known as the “Matewan Massacre”) of May 19, 1920, to determine—

(1) the suitability and feasibility of designating certain historic areas of Matewan, West Virginia, as a unit of the National Park System; and

(2) the methods and means for the protection and interpretation of the historic areas by the National Park Service, other Federal, State, or local government entities, or private or nonprofit organizations.

(b) **STUDY REQUIREMENTS.**—The Secretary shall conduct the study required under subsection (a) in accordance with section 8(c) of Public Law 91-383 (16 U.S.C. 1a-5(c)).

(c) **REPORT.**—Not later than 3 years after the date on which funds are made available to carry out this section, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Natural Resources of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate a report containing—

(1) the results of the study conducted under subsection (a); and

(2) any recommendations of the Secretary with respect to the historic areas.

SEC. 7209. BUTTERFIELD OVERLAND TRAIL.

State listing.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—The Secretary of the Interior (referred to in this section as the “Secretary”) shall conduct a special resource study along the route known as the “Ox-Bow Route” of the Butterfield Overland Trail (referred to in this section as the “route”) in the States of Missouri, Tennessee, Arkansas, Oklahoma, Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, and California to evaluate—

(1) a range of alternatives for protecting and interpreting the resources of the route, including alternatives for potential addition of the Trail to the National Trails System; and

(2) the methods and means for the protection and interpretation of the route by the National Park Service, other



118 STAT. 2250

PUBLIC LAW 108-396—OCT. 30, 2004

Public Law 108-396
108th Congress

An Act

Oct. 30, 2004
[H.R. 4579]

To modify the boundary of the Harry S Truman National Historic Site in the State of Missouri, and for other purposes.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

Truman Farm
Home Expansion
Act.
16 USC 461 note.

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Truman Farm Home Expansion Act”.

SEC. 2. HARRY S TRUMAN NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE BOUNDARY MODIFICATION.

The first section of Public Law 98-32 (16 U.S.C. 461 note) is amended—

- (1) by redesignating subsection (d) as subsection (e); and
- (2) by inserting after subsection (c) the following:

“(d) ACQUISITION OF ADDITIONAL LAND.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may acquire, by donation, purchase with donated or appropriated funds, transfer from another Federal agency, or any other means, the land described in paragraph (2) for inclusion in the Harry S Truman National Historic Site.

“(2) DESCRIPTION OF LAND.—The land referred to in paragraph (1) consists of the approximately 5 acres of land (including the structure located south of the Truman Farm Home site), as generally depicted on the map entitled ‘Harry S Truman National Historic Site Proposed Boundary’, numbered 492/80,027, and dated April 17, 2003.

“(3) BOUNDARY MODIFICATION.—On acquisition of the land under this subsection, the Secretary shall modify the boundary of the Harry S Truman National Historic Site to reflect the acquisition of the land.”.

Approved October 30, 2004.

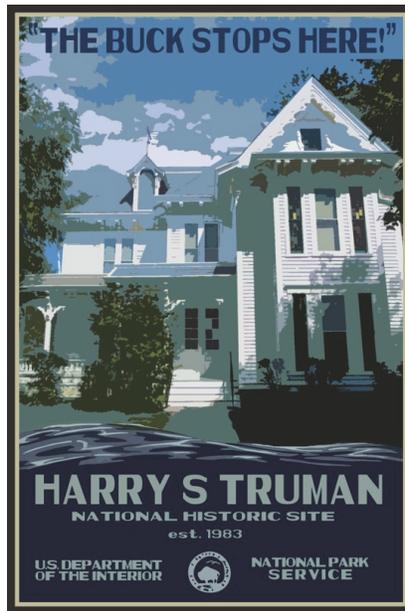
LEGISLATIVE HISTORY—H.R. 4579:

HOUSE REPORTS: No. 108-703 (Comm. on Resources).

CONGRESSIONAL RECORD, Vol. 150 (2004):

Sept. 28, considered and passed House.
Oct. 10, considered and passed Senate.

Appendix B: Harry S Truman NHS Staffing List



HSTR Staffing

Note: The following list of staff who have served at Harry S Truman National Historic Site represents permanent staff only, and does not include seasonal staff

<u>Name</u>	<u>Dates of Service</u>
Superintendents:	
Norman J. Reigle	October 2, 1983-January 1990
Ronald J. Mack	May 1990 – February 20, 1995
Kenneth E. Apschnikat	1995 – January 1999
James Sanders	June 1999- August 21, 2005
Lawrence Villalva	March 2006 – September 2014
Carol J. Dage	July 12, 2015 – Present

Park Secretary:

Jennifer Hayes	April 1, 1984 – Present
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Chief of Administration/Administrative Officers:

Joan L. Sanders	November 27, 1983 – August 1990
Karen L Mason	October 1990 – 1993
Marty Sutherland	1993 – July 1996 (title changed to Administrative Manager in 1994)
Teri Perry	July 1996 – March 29, 1997
Lawrence (Larry) Sandarciero	March 30, 1997 – October 1999
Joanne M. Six	May 8, 2000 – February 2010
Marie Sigafos	June 2011-September 2013
Diana Merrill	2015 – Present

Admin. Clerk/ IT Services

June Murray	July 1991 – November 2006
Jeff Forsyth	2006 – 2008 (IT Specialist)
Diana (Sargent) Merrill	August 2008 – September 2015

Chief of Maintenance/Facility Manager

Gregory (Skip Brooks)	1984 – 1986
Michael Healy	March 1986 – August 1990
Michele Cefola	October 1990 – April 2000
Thomas (Joe) Cannon	December 2000 – November 2005
Alan Dinehart	2006 – 2009
Gregory Wolcott	2009 – Present

Maintenance Workers

Jerry Kunsman	1991 – June 1995
Debbie Bromley	1991 - 1993
Alan Stewart (also Museum Technician)	1997 – 2006
Joseph Gray	1995 – 2005 (He was promoted to Maintenance Worker in 1997 from Laborer.)
Robert (Jim) Hubbell (also Interpreter)	1995-2007
Lewis McKarnin (also Woodcrafter)	1997 –2014 (promoted to Woodcrafter in July 2001) (presently a volunteer Woodcrafter)
Mark Jamieson	2007 – 2015

Chief of Interpretation/Chief Ranger

Thomas P. Richter	(named Ranger-in-Charge January 23, 1983, became Chief Ranger October 2, 1983) – November 1987
Palma Wilson-Buell	1988 – May 3, 1990
Regina Jones-Underwood	1990-1991
Karen Tinnin (also Interpreter)	1991-2007
Eileen Andes	September 30, 2007 – 2009
Michael (Mike) Ryan	September 2009-December 2013

Park Rangers / Park Guides

Palma Wilson-Buell	1984-1988
Rick Jones (Law Enforcement)	April 1984 – September 1986
Cindy Ott Jones (Law Enforcement)	April 1984 – September 1986
Rick Houston	October 1984- April 1985
Regina Klein (Law Enforcement)	Seasonal 1987-88 Perm.May 1989-January 1994
Keith Drews (Law Enforcement)	April 1994 – May 2001
Karen Tinnin	1984- 1991
Brian Hoduski	Seasonal 1986-88-Permanent 1988-1993
Jeffrey B. Wade	Seasonal 1991-Permanent October 1994 – Present
Valerie Steffen	October 1994 – 2001
Derek Manning	1998 - July 2001
David Schafer	August 1992- February 1999
Randy Harmon	1994-1999
Robert (Jim) Hubbell (also Maintenance)	1995.
John Gavin (Security Specialist)	May 2002 – September 2003
Norton Canfield	Seasonal 1996-99. Permanent 1999-Present
Diana (Sargent) Merrill	(Hired as a seasonal April 2002)-2008

Patrick Sargent	(Hired as a seasonal January 2002)-2005
James McGill	April 2007 –Present
Mark Jamieson (also Maintenance)	2007 – ?
Josh Bernick	January 2008- March 2009
David Suvak	May 2009 – Present
Kristen Gibbs	May 2009- September 2010
Matthew Turner	April 2011- September 2015

Chief of Cultural Resources/Museum Curator

Steve Harrison	February 1984- January 1989
Carol J. Dage	July 1989- July 2015
Kristen Stalling	June 2015-Present

Curator (IMPF)

Kristen Stalling	January 2013—June 2016
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Museum Curator

Susan Kopczynski	(on detail assignment) November 27, 1983 – 1984
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Museum Aides/Museum Technicians

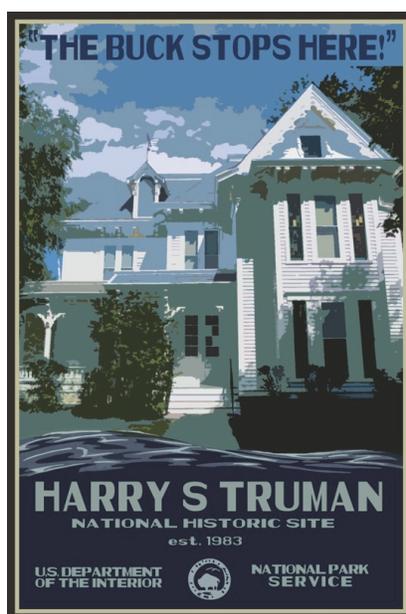
Lisa Bosso-Houston	1984 – 1989
Marshall Plumer	February 1988- April 1989
Michael Shaver	1988 – 1991
Leslie Hagenson	1989-1991
Constance Odom-Soper	1989 – 1992
Connie Wilson	1989 – 1990

Steve Floray	May 1990- October 1990
R. Scott Stone	1991 – 1997
Dean Knudsen	February 1992- July 1992
Kim Baker	1992 –1993
Walter Bailey	1993-1994
Alan Stewart (also Maintenance)	1993-1997 Promoted to Maint. Division
Teresa Valencia	June 23, 1996 – 1998
Angela Everett	February 1998- July 2000
Michael Hosking	January 1999 – 2005
Kristen Stalling	Seasonal/term July 1999-2001 Permanent: July 2001 – January 2013
Darla Hostetler	October 2006—Present

Historian

Jon E. Taylor (also Interpretation)	March 1993 – 1997
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Appendix C: Harry S Truman NHS Budgets



Year	ONPS Base	Extra Funds	Major Projects
1983	\$160,000	* Park Restoration and Improvement Project: unspecified	* Existing conditions drawings * Reimburse estate of Bess Wallace Truman
1984	\$296,000		* Electrical rewiring * Roof Repairs
1985	\$356,100		* Exterior rehabilitation
1986	\$336,200		
1987	\$403,900	* Fee collection: \$21,507	* Carriage House stabilization
1988	\$408,700	* Unspecified, for Collections Storage Facility * Fee collection: \$23,922	* Truman Home foundation repointing
1989	\$385,625	* Cyclic maintenance: \$13,700 * Cultural Cyclic: \$25,000 * Fee Program (No Year): \$34,400 * VIP Program: \$600 * Fee Collection: \$24,471	
1990	\$428,000	Unspecified, for Truman Home Reroofing: \$36,650	
1992	\$542,000		
1993	\$549,000		* Frank Wallace Home rehabilitation
1994/1995	Not specified	* George Wallace asbestos removal: \$7,000 * Truman Home structural investigations (1994): \$50,000 * Truman Home structural investigations (1995): \$40,000 * Collections cataloging: \$15,000	

		* Fee Collection: \$73,291
1996	\$815,800	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Fee Collection Operations: \$38,000 * Challenge Cost Share Grant-HABS drawings: \$9,400 * Missouri State Coordinator expenses: \$700 * Curatorial backlog-cataloging: \$9,800 * Cultural Resources Training Initiative: \$5,300 * VIP Program: \$500 * Lead abatement and painting, Noland Home: \$200,000 * Entrance Fees: \$61,259
1997	\$845,400	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * No-year fee monies: \$75,000 * Fee Collection Operations: \$38,000 * Challenge Cost Share Grant-HABS drawings \$9,991 * Missouri State Coordinator expenses: \$1,500 * VIP Program: \$500 * Maintainizer Future Projects Program: \$12,000 (Truman Home carpeting), \$20,000 (Truman Farm Home exterior painting) * Entrance Fees: \$57,970 * Golden Age Passports: \$3,600 * Golden Eagle Passports: \$5,445
1998	\$967,000	
1999	\$994,000	
2000	\$1,025,000 Less \$16,000 for MWRO assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Missouri State Coordinator: \$1,500 * VIP Program: \$500 * Cost of Fee Collection Reimbursement: \$13,600 * Cultural Cyclic (collections storage facility): \$2,000 * Golden Eagle (Truman Home curtain reproductions): \$5,400 * CRPP (Historic Resource Studies, Noland/Wallace Homes, Truman Farm): \$50,000 * ENRO A (oral history transcripts): \$4,000 * Cultural Cyclic (Truman Home driveway): \$5,000 * Cultural Cyclic (Truman Farm Home and Carriage House+

	roofs): \$17,200	
	* Cultural Cyclic (Truman Home porches): \$6,200	
	* Cultural Cyclic (Truman Home storm windows): \$5,600	
2001	* Missouri State Coordinator: \$1,900	
	* VIP Program: \$500	
	* Cost of Fee Collection Reimbursement: \$30,000	
	* Cultural Cyclic (Truman Home painting): \$93,500	
	* Golden Eagle (Truman Home curtains): \$5,400	
	* Maintenance Non-Fee (20%) (fire security): \$67,000	
	* Maintenance Fee (20%) (Truman Home structural work): \$143,000	
	* Maintenance Fee Demo (20%) (historic wallcoverings preservation): \$94,248	
	* Employee relocation: \$15,976	
	* Carry Over Money 04 account: \$20,448	
2002	* Missouri State Coordinator: \$1,900	
	* VIP Program: \$500	
	* CRRP Collections (photograph museum collections): \$23,000	
	* Cost of Fee Collection Reimbursement: \$30,000	
	* Golden Eagle (Truman Home curtains): \$5,400	
	* Maintenance Fee Demo (20%) (fire and security alarm): \$67,000	
	* Maintenance Fee Demo (20%) (lead abatement): \$49,981	
	* Maintenance Fee Demo (20%) (Truman Home wallcoverings): \$94,248	
2003	* Missouri State Coordinator: \$1,500	
	* VIP Program: \$500	
	* Cost of Fee Collection Reimbursement: \$29,290	
	* CRRP (photograph museum collections): \$25,000	
	* 20% Fee Demo (fire/security alarm systems): \$67,000	
	* 20% Fee Demo (Truman Home wallcoverings; carryover): \$14,461	
	* 20% Fee Demo (Truman Home wallcoverings) \$94,248	

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Golden Eagle Fee Demo (Truman Home wallcoverings, carryover): \$1,412 * Housing (05 Fund) (lead abatement, alarm): \$57,000 * 80% Fee Demo (historic structures report, Noland Home): \$55,000 * Repair/Rehab (07 Fund) (historic structures report, Noland Home): \$45,000 * Cultural Cyclic (historic structures report, Noland Home and Carriage House lead abatement): \$35,000 * Repair/Rehab (07 Fund) (Truman Farm Garage): \$37,000
2004	\$1,083,000 Less \$66,682 for MWRO assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Missouri State Coordinator: \$1,500 * VIP Program: \$1,645 * CRRP Collections: \$24,000 * Cost of Fee Collection Reimbursement: \$26,000 * 20% Maintenance Non-Fee (fire security): \$67,000 * 20% Maintenance Fee Demo (historic wall plaster preservation): \$48,121 * Cyclic: \$92,000 * Cyclic FMSS: \$12,000 * Housing (05 Fund): \$50,697 * Repair/Rehab (07 Fund) (Truman Farm structural investigation): \$1,693
2005	\$1,208,000 Less \$66,378 for MWRO assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Missouri State Coordinator: \$1,500 * VIP Program: \$1,465 * CRRP Collections: \$17,959 * Cost of Fee Collection Reimbursement: \$28,600 * Cultural Resource Park Management (wallcovering study): \$35,438 * Cultural Resource Park Management (Noland Home construction): \$22,288 * Cultural Cyclic \$875 * Regular Cyclic (George Wallace Home garage): \$12,791 * Regular Cyclic (Truman Home fence): \$22,150 * Regular Cyclic (museum collection): \$13,600 * Regular Cyclic (AV equipment): \$16,043

* Housing (05 Fund): \$212,860

2007 \$1,225,322

2008 \$1,359,000 Missouri State Coordinator: \$1,500
Less \$42,260 for Reimbursement from MWRO: \$1,100
MWRO assessment Cost of Collections: \$20,000
VIP Program: \$886
Fee Collection Reimbursement: \$20,000
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