

Alec Gould, Park Superintendent, Colonial NHP

**STATE OF THE PARK (SUPERINTENDENT'S NARRATIVE)
FOR FY2002**

Lands

The highlight of the year for land protection was the donation of 111 acres of historic land to NPS by the development company that owns land around Historic Green Spring. The CEO of the company, Marc Sharp, is on the board of the Friends of NPS for Green Spring. Alec has worked closely with Marc Sharp who has a great appreciation for history and the role of NPS in preserving Green Spring.

The Jamestown marina is the biggest eyesore along the Colonial Parkway. Alec had positive conversations during the year with Tony Conte, Boyd Sponaugle, and the landowner. The climate is now right for NPS to negotiate for an interest in land which will allow us to at least partially screen the marina.

The rather complex land exchange with York County moved forward with some NPS properties being taken off the table as low priority. Appraising all the NPS properties with the different restrictions proved time-consuming for appraisers, but progress was made with hope that the appraisals would be finished early in 2003. The land exchange is important for NPS to meet its conservation and visitor use goals in the historic village and for York County to meet its development goals. Alec had a number of successful meetings with York County officials to keep various aspects of the land exchange and project planning on track.

York County approached us about long-term development and use of the Cheatham Pond area. The events of September 11 motivated the Navy and the CIA at Camp Perry to oppose York County's plans and to assert their interest in total control of the property. Alec arranged meetings with all parties to resolve this long-standing issue. It appeared at year's end that the Navy had the strongest position, but more meetings and analysis in the near future are needed to determine the outcome.

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Jamestown

The most momentous event of the year for Colonial NHP was Regional Director Rust's selection of Sandy Rives as the new Project Director for Jamestown. Communication immediately improved with the Jamestown-Yorktown Foundation (JYF), consultants to NPS and APVA, the park staff, Congressional delegation, and others. Sandy and Alec work well together.

Much of the year was spent debating the details of the DCP/EIS. Should the NPS collections stay on Jamestown Island? Should the Visitor Center be moved to the present parking lot? To what extent should Neck of Land be developed? How much parking should remain on Jamestown Island and how much at Neck of Land? How large should the Visitor Center be? Is an Observation Building (Treasure House) on the site of the Visitor Center justified? How much money is desirable and feasible for Congress to appropriate and for the private sector to supply? These questions and more were finally decided and put into a final draft with a preferred alternative for review by the public and then the Regional Director, the Director and the Development Advisory Board. Many of the public comments supported the preferred alternative. The greatest volume of negative comments came from people who wanted boat ramps along the Colonial Parkway. Our response is that the construction and operation of boat launches along the Parkway would change the character of the Parkway and cause problems of parking, erosion, inappropriate use, enforcement, and funding.

Issues with the Jamestown-Yorktown Foundation included design of Route 359, joint ticketing, and fundraising—to name only three. Early in the year, we had a partial breakthrough with Route 359 when James City County and VDOT officials agreed with our position on the design of the connection to the Parkway. We had to pledge an extra fast environmental assessment and commitment for \$469,000, but thanks to Dorothy Geyer, Bob Holzheimer and others we were able to meet those commitments. (The re-routing of 359 is still not near what it should be, but at least we will now have a better connection to the Parkway.) JYF also reluctantly agreed to provide for a shuttle bus stop in their new parking area. Sandy Rives played a key role in shuttle bus discussions.

After three years of being stonewalled by JYF on joint ticketing, Alec talked with State Senator Tommy Norment who was Vice Chair (now co-chair) of JYF. Tommy agreed and later told Alec that he really had to push hard to get the JYF Board to move at all, but the JYF staff did start talking with us about how to do joint ticketing. Alec also asked Colin Campbell, President of Colonial Williamsburg, to use his influence with the JYF Board on the subject of joint ticketing and Colin's strong position helped.

One bright spot in the working relationships between NPS/APVA and JYF was the written agreement in principle to jointly fund-raise for the signature events of 2007. Sandy Rives played a significant role in crafting this document.

Our relationship continued good with APVA, our partners at Jamestown. APVA continued to be patient and long-suffering with our bureaucratic processes that prolonged the DCP/EIS to over three years. We worked well together with many issues and many projects including a new audio tour for Jamestown and a joint archeological field school. One high profile project was the new-image-for-Jamestown project that culminated on May 9 with the unveiling of a new name (Historic Jamestowne) and a new graphic identity designed by the Andy Williams marketing firm.

MAP

A capable NPS team came to Colonial in September to review present management and to make recommendations for the future. The team said that "this complex and important park is well managed and maintained, that there are few significant issues with park staff, and that relationships with primary partners are for the most part quite positive." They were "particularly impressed with the progress that has been made in implementation of the GMP (1992)." Regarding the future, the team expressed quite clearly that "the park faces a serious challenge if it is not to be overwhelmed by preparations for the 400th anniversary celebration of Jamestown." The team wisely (in Alec's view) recommended that "the Jamestown Project should be managed by one senior project manager who would oversee the work on a full-time, resident basis until all aspects of the project are completed." We are

hopeful that funding will be available to make this recommendation a reality early in 2003. Other recommendations included a streamlined decision-making process, acknowledgement of the project as a high priority by all NPS offices, a critical path work schedule, identification of operational issues, team-building, and organizational analysis with particular attention to staffing issues.

Yorktown

Yorktown projects, tied to the NPS vision as expressed in the 1993 GMP, gathered steam with excellent cooperation from York County and others. Although not near as high profile as Jamestown 2007, many in Yorktown and beyond are looking to polish up the historic village and the battlefield by 2006, the 225th Anniversary of the victory at Yorktown. The going is a bit complex because of the diversity of funding sources (at least 12 at last count) and the never ending hoops that NPS must jump through to satisfy cultural and environmental concerns. Significant progress was made on the following projects: extension of the Yorktown Riverwalk over NPS property on the west side of the village; restoration and use of the Pate House on Main Street as a restaurant with an NPS concessioner; repair of the Wormley Pond Dam and access road through an interagency agreement with the Corps of Engineers; transfer of ownership and restoration of the historic freight shed building to the Yorktown Trustees and York County with the county picked up the restoration expense of nearly a million dollars; restoration of George Washington's tent through a cooperative venture with Colonial Williamsburg and exhibit of the tent (Phase I) in the Yorktown Visitor Center; completed of construction drawings and construction contract for the Poor Potter's project.

The Grace Church controversy over the proposed addition to the church increased in intensity during 2002 with letters and e-mails flying every month to everyone under the sun. The governing body of the church wants to build the addition. A vocal minority does not. NPS has an easement which requires us to approve or disapprove proposed additions. NPS and the SHPO are taking a professional and objective approach by requiring full historical, archeological and architectural research and evaluation of NPS policies and historic preservation standards before making the decision.

Green Spring

In the spring of 2002 our GMP for Historic Green Spring caused quite a stir with many in James City County and Williamsburg. The primary issue was whether to accept the NPS recommendation that the Centerville Road be closed doing through Green Spring. Although our Friends groups and many others strongly supported this position, number of people who live in the area spoke loudly against the proposal. When it became evident that county officials were not prepared to bit the bullet and recommend closing to VDOT, we settled upon a revised preferred alternative that NPS, James City County, and the Friends could live with. The preferred alternative says that NPS and Friends will do initial development on the west side of Centerville Road. After that is complete and successfully operating, NPS will come back to the County to request closing of the road to make possible the visitor contact station and other development needed on the east side of the road.

The Friends of NPS for Green Spring continue to perform as a model Friends group. During the year they did Park Watch, educational programs, funding and volunteers for archeological research, and support for NPS during the public planning process. The Friends are poised to assist with fund-raising for the GMP once the plan is approved in early 2003. The Friends are also committed to supplying volunteers to staff the site once it is open.

Conclusion

During 2002, park division chiefs, regional staff, partners in the area, and others worked well together to meet the enormous challenges facing Colonial NHP. The single greatest need we have is for more money to hire the key staff for the development at Jamestown, the 2007 Observance, and other essential projects. The \$600,000 requested as an operating increase for FY 2003 is the minimum needed.