

# **Hopewell Furnace National Historic Site 2011 Superintendent's Annual Report**

Submitted by Edie Shean-Hammond  
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## *Introduction*

Established during the height of the Depression by the FDR Administration as a pleasuring ground for the people of Philadelphia, Hopewell Furnace National Historic Site is America's finest example of a rural 19th century iron making plantation. This beautiful pastoral park not only provides a romantic view of early industrial America, but also sheds light on the long standing conservation relationship between industry and nature. This interdependency and careful use of natural resources exhibited at Hopewell throughout its history makes this park extremely relevant to the issues of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. The programs of the Depression—WPA/CCC—discovered the Village and the Furnace as they were constructing French Creek Recreation Demonstration Area (established at the same time as Shenandoah RDA). In the 1940s, some 7,000 acres of French Creek were deeded to the state while the Historic Site retained nearly 1,000 acres. Hopewell now encompasses more than 81 historic structures, including the original masonry blast furnace, ironmaster's house, and tenant buildings, restorations of the buildings where iron casting was done and fuel was stored and loaded, several smaller structures, farm houses, CCC picnic areas, school house ruins and a church. The park is rich in African American history as Hopewell's founder Mark Bird was the largest slave owner in Berks and Chester Counties, and future owners were sympathetic to run-away slaves. We are learning that the 18<sup>th</sup> century Africans who lived here were extremely influential in the design and construction of the iron industry which eventually ensured that Pennsylvania produced 15% of the world's iron in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The success of Hopewell Company depended upon the thousands of acres of woodland which surrounded the Furnace. As a result of historic conservation practices, today the park is at the center of the largest forest in Southeastern Pennsylvania: Hopewell Big Woods.

With an emphasis on the economy and leadership, 2011 brought significant improvements to the park. The year was dedicated to focusing on the priorities, purposes and actions that were identified in the 2006 Core Operations Workshop. These purposes and priorities were significantly different as there was a new emphasis on preserving cultural resources, providing recreational and learning opportunities, and increasing visitation. The year also focused on implementing several recommendations of the 2006 T-Map. In addition to a thriving sales operation in the Office Store, there was a significant increase in activity in the Village with a new gardening program and children's games offered on weekends. The park benefited from several grants and produced a new Junior Ranger Program as well as creating a new environmental curriculum. Perhaps the most notable achievement is the park's being selected as the Northeast Region's laboratory for the future of the National Park System as a subject park in the Designing the Parks Competition. Universities throughout the United States competed to be able to hold a design studio focused on Hopewell Furnace. Two schools have won the first phase of the competition: Rutgers University and Pratt Institute.

With the retirement of Park Ranger Steven Ambrose and concerns about the financial future of the National Park System, the Regional Director decided to combine the operations of Hopewell Furnace with Valley Forge. Once the Valley Forge superintendent is appointed, Hopewell's superintendent will report to the superintendent of Valley Forge. The park has captured new avenues for revenues, civic engagement and has made new friends who are lending support.

## **Administration**

**Congressional Relations:** A top priority for Congressman James Gerlach (PA 6<sup>th</sup> District) is mitigating the flooding of Hopewell Village and the potential flooding of other areas of Warwick Township. Hopewell's historic village is in the French Creek flood plain. With advocacy from the Congressman, the NPS provided \$80,000 to the Corps of Army Engineers to undertake the modeling for mitigating flooding. The Corps of Army Engineers Report is complete and has been sent to NER for translation into the FMSS/PMIS systems. The Congressman continues to support Hopewell Big Woods (HBW), a private/public partnership of some 40 local, state and federal organizations. With Hopewell Furnace at its center, the HBW is dedicated to preserving some 15,000 acres of contiguous forest land, the largest forest in southeastern PA. The Partnership and the park have successfully secured RTCA assistance for recreational planning which has led to the design of the Hopewell Big Woods Trail this year.

**Budget:** The ONPS budget this fiscal year continued to be challenging. We were able to run a 7-day a week operation from June thru Labor Day.

**Personnel:** Awards, both time-off and monetary, have been distributed to several employees for special projects and outstanding performance. The \$100 buck award has been awarded every month to a different employee. This award is a star award and is nominated by individuals for employees in different divisions and presented at First Wednesday staff meetings. The park hired a new Administrative Officer who transferred to a position at Valley Forge. Backing up that position is a SCEP Administrative trainee who will be eligible for conversion to the permanent job on completion of her Master's Degree. Another SCEP position was established in Maintenance to assist the Facility Manager. We remain down several positions in Maintenance.

**Diversity:** Our operational needs are supported each summer with the assistance of one or more Student Conservation Association crews. Our two trail crews, consisting of 16 members, are broken down as one Asian female, one Asian male, one Black male, four White females, and five White males.

We are continuing our emphasis on the African-American story at Hopewell and are actively seeking an outreach to the Hispanic Community, as we try to diversify our visitor audience. We also were a featured stop on the fourth annual familiarization tour conducted by the Central Pennsylvania Museum of African American History which included several buses filled with dignitaries from Berks County. The museum opened a

new exhibit which featured prominently Hopewell Furnace through artifacts and graphics. The park's interpretive program continued to focus on the contributions of the United States Colored Troops in collaboration with the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania as part of the Civil War Sesquicentennial.

We have also made significant progress engaging the Hispanic Community. We have been working with the The Centro Cultural Latinos Unidos, Inc., (CCLU) a non-profit organization established in 1997 to enhance the leadership skills of Latino youth. Their program assists immigrant children from more than 13 Latin American countries in their assimilation of American culture. The park superintendent continues to serve on the CCLU's Advisory Board.

The park's fifth week-long summer camp focused the CCLU children on nature and heritage. Lying at the center of the globally significant forest—Hopewell Big Woods, the park's natural resources provided grist for a new natural resources curriculum developed by the park's first Teacher-Ranger-Teacher. That teacher along with the SCA intern dedicated to creating the park's Junior Ranger program ran the week long experience for the CCLU students. They pioneered both the curriculum and the Junior Ranger program successfully.

**Concessions:** As recommended by the T-MAP, the park has been building relationships with local vendors. This year the park sought and was granted Commercial Use Authority.

The Eastern National Concessions operation continues to include the offering of coffee, tea, and hot chocolate as well as sodas and snacks. Eastern National continues its generous support of the park. Following the recommendations of the T-Map and the removal of the bars from the Village Store, we continue to sell arts and crafts made by volunteers on site. With the help of Eastern National, the store is now fully outfitted with appropriate sales items including snacks and drinks.

Fiscal Year 2011 Gross Sales at Hopewell Furnace National Historic Site were \$24,540. The 2011 figure, when compared to FY 2010's sales figure of \$29,969 indicates a decrease of \$5,429 in sales volume. This 18% drop in sales was expected as the 2010 figure reflected a special teacher's program that year. The 2011 sales figure reflects the true sales increase at Hopewell Furnace, the highest in 13 years. The sales from the Eastern National Village Store have continued to be an incredible boost in both sales and visitor service. The park's Visitor Center and village buildings remain closed on Mondays and Tuesdays. During mid-June through Labor Day, the Visitor Center and bookstores were open seven days as a result of available staffing. Over 21,000 visitors entered the visitor center during Fiscal Year 2011. Overall calendar year park visitation figures were reported as being down, totaling 41,258 visits according to our October 2011 Monthly Public Use Report. The percentage of visitors taking advantage of the park's resources has reportedly declined 19.61% over last year's total of 51,319 visits.

The park staff and superintendent view these visitation figures with suspicion for two reasons. First, early in 2011 the National Park Service installed a new counter on the entrance road at Hopewell Furnace. The counter has malfunctioned several times and the park feels its numbers are unreliable. Also, anecdotal reports from park staff and volunteers do not reflect the reduced visitation. Hopefully, in 2012 the traffic counter problems can be resolved.

Once again three Charcoal Making Demonstrations this year were made possible due to funds from the Donation Account. The money was used to purchase wood which was then turned into charcoal during the demonstration. This charcoal is then used in the Cast House to fire the modern cupola furnace during our Moulding Demonstrations and in the Blacksmith Shop to heat the iron for forging. In addition, 10 lb bags of charcoal are now available for sale. The individual pieces of charcoal selling at \$1 a bag sell out during our Iron Plantation Christmas event.

Vending Operations in the form of bottled drinks, coffee and individual snacks were again a popular visitor service. KSA Vending Inc. continues to provide a high level of visitor service at Hopewell Furnace NHS. The total sales of snacks sold through the Eastern National Register in Fiscal Year 2011 were \$1,109.85. The increase in the sales of snacks over last year supports the need to continue to provide this valuable visitor service. Vending sales through the drink machines owned by KSA Vending are reported to Eastern National directly. Reports of this income need to be provided to the park in FY 2012.

**Contracting:** Most of the purchasing done at Hopewell is through the use of the government purchase card. All purchases are coordinated through, and approved by, the Administrative Officer (AO). For the third year, projects were successfully contracted through the Mid Atlantic Major Acquisition and Buying Office or MABO.

**Training:** This year we provided training and development opportunities for our staff in a wide variety of areas including law enforcement, wild land fire, first aid, interpretive techniques, emergency response, cultural resources management, and safety. 100% of the staff was trained in Operational Leadership. The superintendent was appointed to a superintendent's leadership roundtable (SLR7) and elected to the Youth Network Pilot. The regularly scheduled monthly staff meeting on the first Wednesday of the month features a training module. Our Natural Resource Manager continued to provide firearms qualifications and armorer service to VAFO and assistance to INDE with firearms qualifications. This year he also trained ROVA staff. The Cultural Resources mentoring program with Shenandoah has proven to be very helpful to our Cultural Resource manager. The program has been in place during FY 09 and is continuing. Of note, 80% of the staff is trained in Red Cross first aid, CPR and AED.

**Information Technology:** With the retirement of Park Ranger Steven Ambrose who had collateral IT responsibilities, the park has acquired one quarter of an IT specialist Karen Heitz. Having a specialist available significantly increases our ability to address IT issues. We continue to use social networking to provide curricula to teachers, photos and

programs. The implementation of these programs has dramatically expanded our interpretation capacity. We have been able to meet all IT mandatory training requirements.

## **Maintenance and Facility Management**

2011 presented extraordinary challenges for the Maintenance division. A late October snowstorm forced the park to close for four days. With no electricity for three days, the park ran out of water. When water was restored, the drinking water tested high for ecoli. The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania has placed under a mandate to improve the drinking water by March 9, 2012. The park has installed water coolers throughout public spaces and in residences. With strong leadership from the Facility Manager and support from Northeast Region we continue to work on other issues including addressing pervasive flooding of Hopewell Village. 2011 saw additional efforts to mitigate flooding. The Army Corps of Engineers completed their study making recommendations which demonstrated that flood mitigation was possible by making some minor changes to the landscape and restoring drainage. With teamwork and drawing on maintenance staff from NER and VAFO as well as the Olmsted Center, and the Student Conservation Association, resources in the park have been significantly improved.

The following are FY 11 highlights:

## **Maintenance Projects Completed**

### *Projects and Work Performed in 2011*

- Replace Roof at Butler Building
- Paint Interior of Church House
- Replace Windows at Maintenance Shop
- Design for Install New Septic System at Tenant House
- Repair and Paint Ironmasters House
- Design for Paving of Rear Entrance Road
- Design and Contract for Repair Electrical Wiring at Ironmasters House
- Contract for Repair and Paint Exterior Stone walls and Trim of Care House
- Contract for Paint Interior Of Thomas Lloyd House
- Contract for Lead Abatement and Paint at Boarding House
- Finished repair exterior and interior of Tenant House # 1
- Repair water line break and leak on main in Lower Village area.
- Repair water line break and leak on line to Care House
- Replaced exterior doors at Mule Barn
- Replaced steps at Office Store
- Replaced and installed safety signs and fire extinguishers at Maintenance Complex
- Provided safety training at monthly employee meeting
- Fixed and relined with fire brick portable furnace used during special programs.

- Repaired Wall at Bake Ovens
- Design and Repair Flume at Water Wheel
- Install Bulletin Boards at Trail Heads

## **Interpretation and Education**

Although visitation to Hopewell Furnace remained generally flat, participation in interpretative programs increased. That fact and the results from the GPR survey convinced the park staff that we are heading in the right direction. The percentage of park visitors expressing overall satisfaction remained at 100%. As in FY10, the park exceeded its GPR goal for visitor understanding with the score of 90% showing an increase over last year's 88%. This was particularly rewarding as the park operated with a smaller interpretive staff in FY 11 than it had in FY 10.

The Division of Interpretation continues to move toward a diverse interpretive program that tells all of the stories of Hopewell Furnace and its landscape. This year the program expressed itself in a seasonal living history schedule, special events, education programs, special tours, and our relationship with our valued partner, Eastern National. Education and interpretive programs offer a variety of relevant experiences that engage a wide range of park visitors and effectively communicate the core park themes.

The interpretive staff continues to focus on developing and presenting a diverse and inclusive interpretive program and on attracting underserved/underrepresented audiences.

Because the school districts nearest to the park each scored below the state average on standardized reading and math proficiency tests, the park began in 2010 to develop strategically designed education programs to help teachers. The first phase of this came in 2010 with the completion of the *Baptism Creek District Trail Guide*. This publication was specifically designed to act as a curriculum based tool that can be used by formal school groups, home study groups, scout groups, families, or individuals. The activities weave a connection between natural and cultural resources and among various academic subjects: reading, writing, science, social studies, and math.

This project continued in FY 11 with the help of a talented Teacher-Ranger-Teacher who refined the trail guide and turned it into a curriculum based education program that can be used by middle and high school classes as well as home study groups, scout troops, or individuals.

The park's original dramatic presentation *From Out the Fiery Furnace* continues to be popular, offering a unique instrument for outreach and off site programs.

### **Living History**

As has become customary our outstanding group of collier volunteers demonstrated traditional methods of charcoal making three times during 2011. This program attracts and astonishes the public as visitors realize the work that went into making charcoal in preindustrial days.

From Memorial Day through Labor Day seasonal employees and volunteers in the Cast House demonstrated molding and casting for visitors. Visitors could participate in the program by “pounding sand” and/or making an aluminum stove plate and then purchasing it at the Village Store.

### **Special Events**

Park staff organized and implemented eleven special events during the course of the year. These events fall into four categories: interpretive, volunteer work opportunities, recreation, and commemorative.

#### **Interpretive:**

***“From Out the Fiery Furnace”*** – Hopewell celebrated Women’s History Month by offering an onsite presentation of this one act play. The play written, performed, and directed by volunteers illustrates the life of one woman at Hopewell. In 2011 Hopewell took the play on the road and presented it at Women’s Rights NHS in Seneca Falls, NY. The audience and park staff enjoyed the connection between an industrial site and a political site.

***Civilian Conservation Corps Jazz Fest Concert*** – Hopewell remembered the work of the CCC and participated in the Berks County Jazz Fest by inviting the Exeter Community Bank to perform at the Visitor Center.

***Sheep Shearing Day*** – Hopewell celebrated Mother’s Day by highlighting the activities that sustained life in the village. Sheep shearing day included not only the shearing of the park’s herd of sheep but also demonstrations of the techniques needed to create and use textiles in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

***Children’s Games and Pastimes*** – The 19<sup>th</sup> century children of Hopewell enjoyed a variety of games and toys. This year the park staff invited 21<sup>st</sup> century children to join them in those same recreational activities. The day included a spirited game of town ball and story time for all ages.

***Harvest Time*** – Complementing sheep shearing day, Harvest time emphasizes the work of harvesting the crops and preserving food for the long winter ahead.

***On the Home Front*** – The park staff and volunteers from the Living History Society of New Jersey took visitors back to the difficult year of 1861. Abraham Lincoln had won the presidency, secession and fighting had begun and the future was unknown. This weekend event focused on the activities and the emotions of those left at home while the armies fought.

***Iron Plantation Christmas*** – Staff and volunteers take each building in the village back to a different era of Hopewell’s history to illustrate the various ways the people of Hopewell celebrated the holiday. This year the fearsome Belsnickel was joined by a 19<sup>th</sup>

century St. Nicholas in the Ironmaster's House and a modern Santa in the Visitor Center. Children enjoyed making ornaments for their Christmas trees at home.

Meanwhile at Bethesda Church volunteers entertained visitors with appropriate period music.

### **Work Opportunities:**

***March for Parks*** – This popular annual event commemorates the work of the Civilian Conservation Corps by having volunteers follow in their footsteps and clean up the village and trails in preparation for the new season.

***National Public Lands Day*** – On National Public Lands Day a small group of volunteers worked to remove exotic species from the park's vegetation.

### **Recreation:**

***Fala Day*** – Each April the park recognizes the role of Franklin Roosevelt in preserving Hopewell by honoring his favorite dog Fala. Visitors are invited to bring their dogs and participate in fun competition, educational activities and history.

**Bicycles:** The Park continues to be a stop on the French and Pickering Creek Trust's *Iron Tour*.

### **Commemorative:**

***Establishment Day: Fueling the Furnace*** – The Park celebrates its birthday each August with a special charcoal making demonstration, speeches by local dignitaries and special recognitions. This year the park recognized the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Hopewell Big Woods partnership.

### **Special Tours:**

The park's continuing effort to offer a diverse interpretive program is illustrated by our offering special tours to bus groups from the Central Pennsylvania African American Museum.

For the first time in 2011 the park participated in Chester County's "Town Tours and Village Walks" offering an in depth after hours tour of the park.

### **Environmental Education**

Several programs were offered in Environmental Education by Facility Manager George Martin. The Superintendent participated in these programs promoting Hopewell throughout the community. These are off site programs in cooperation with several non-profit organizations held throughout 2011.

## Cultural Resources

**Compliance:** The Park completed Section 106 & NEPA compliance for eight projects. This included compliance for repairing retaining walls and wiring at the Ironmaster's House. In addition, two building interiors and five exteriors were painted using existing blanket PEPC project statements. Buildings painted included Tenant House 1 & 3, Thomas Lloyd House, the Charcoal House and John Church House. Compliance is on-going for an additional project that will resurface the park's back entrance road. New this year was a project with PENDOT. Cultural Resource Manager Rebecca Ross and Archeologist Jill Mayo of NER Heritage, Preservation, Planning & Compliance worked with Penn DOT Regional Architectural Historian, Kristina Lammi Thompson concerning Section 106 Compliance for the intersection of Rt. 345 and the East Headrace

The park's PEPC project 25357 Blanket Compliance for Routine Exterior painting and Masonry Coatings was revised to include a 6-inch excavation around the perimeter of buildings. The park consulted with SHPO archeologist Doug McLearen concerning planned use of this technique on the Nathan Care House. NPS archeologist Jill Mayo and HOFU Curatorial intern Alex Kuestner excavated three test units at the site. HOFU Curatorial Interns Rachael Surmick and Alex Kuestner cleaned and cataloged the 270 objects excavated from the site. Jill Mayo wrote a report on the excavation and completed analysis of the artifacts.

Discussion was ongoing concerning HOFU USACE Drainage Study Project. On February 10, 2011, Archeologist Doug McLearen of the SHPO's office attended a Stake Holder's Follow-up Design Meeting at the park. The Corps of Engineers presented their findings to government officials and upper level regional office managers including Shaun Eyring, John Piltzecker, Allen Ellsworth and Steven Spaulding.

Tribal Historic Preservation Officer Sherry White of the Stockbridge-Munsee Community was offered an opportunity to visit the park, but declined. Tamara Francis, Cultural Preservation Director of the Delaware Nation and Brice Obermeyer of the Delaware Tribe of Indians also declined.

Excelon has agreed to pay cost recovery for NPS Archeologist Jill Mayo to assess damages for an unauthorized siren pole they installed in the park. The assessment did occur in early FY12.

**LCS:** Cultural Resource Manager Rebecca Ross worked with NER Historical Architects Marilou Ehrler and Richard Crisson of the Historic Architecture Program to gather data needed to seek SHPO concurrence for adding ten Civilian Conservation Corps structures to the LCS.

The projected GPRA Goal Ia5 for List of Classified Structures was, “By September 30, 2011, 41 (50% of 81) of Hopewell Furnace’s historic structures are in good condition. “ The actual results are: 38 (50% of 76) LCS Historic Structures are in good condition.

**ASMIS:** FY11 GPRA Goal Ia8 results are that 65% or 28 out of 43 archeological sites listed in ASMIS are in good condition. This exceeds the park goal of 61% or 23 out of 38 sites in good condition. Baseline numbers have changed because assessment of five ASMIS sites was completed this year.

NER Archeologist Jill Mayo worked with Maintenance Assistant Pam Zesotarski and Rebecca Ross, as Pam added information for fourteen Managed Archeology Sites (MAS) to FMSS. Jill added six sub-sites to ASMIS and will add two new sites in the future, the West Headrace and the Tail Race.

The park’s archeological overview an assessment was completed by Public Archeology Laboratory (PAL). The Pennsylvania SHPO and THPO for the Stockbridge-Munsee Community Sherry White were invited to review the draft, but declined. Jill Mayo, Archeologist; Heritage Preservation, Planning & Compliance made three multi-day visits to the park in FY10 to add five new sites to the park’s Archeological Sites Management Information System (ASMIS) database. This increased the total number of sites from 38 to 43. In April 2010 Jill worked with Cultural Resource Manager Rebecca Ross and Ed Scott of Delaware Valley Orienteering Association (DVOA) to examine and record sites DVOA had found. Jill returned in the July and September to work with the park’s curatorial interns to update condition assessments of ASMIS sites.

**Accessioning and Cataloging:** Noteworthy accessions and cataloging for Hopewell Furnace for FY11 included HOFU-1122, which is a 19<sup>th</sup> century Hopewell Stove. That stove and a Warwick Stove which will be used consumptively were donated to the park this year by Pennsylvania State Constable William Quain. Curatorial Interns cataloged 293 objects in FY11.

The park met 66.21% or 394 out of 595 standards for the Automated Checklist Program (ACP) for FY11. This exceeded the park’s GPRA Goal Ia6 that stated 57% or 339 out of 595 standards would be met in FY11.

**Deaccessions:** Hopewell Furnace’s Collections Advisory Committee meet via phone conference numerous times during the fall of 2010 and the winter of 2011 to discuss potential deaccession of excess artifacts including barn vehicles, a stove plate on loan to another site and artifacts removed from a pest infestation in Tenant House 1. It was decided that the Maryann Furnace stove plate on loan to Codorus State Park must stay in National Park Service ownership. A cupboard from Tenant House 1 was transferred to Fort Necessity. Numerous artifacts from Tenant House 1 were approved for submission to the National Clearing House.

**Security Inventory:** Steve Keller of Architect's Security Group completed a Mini-Assessment of Security for Hopewell Furnace's Museum Storage Building, Visitor Center Exhibits and Ironmaster's Mansion. Also intern Morgan Hanlon from Albright College completed photography of museum artifacts exhibited and stored in the Ironmaster's Kitchen and Nursery and has begun photographing artifacts stored in the central upstairs bedroom. Morgan also photographed molding demonstrations March for the Parks. Volunteer Julieann Putt has finalized and printed visual inventories of artifacts exhibited in the Parlor, Dining Room and Office Study of the Ironmaster's House.

**Library:** July through September Intern Rachael Surmick and volunteer Steven Collier worked with Amalin Ferguson of NPS Libraries via Sametime technology. Work included inventories of library holdings and review of electronic catalog records. The goal of the project is to put catalog records of Hopewell Furnace's library holdings on NPS Voyager, for general public search.

**Historic Housekeeping:** NER Museum Services specialist Bridget Sullivan completed Hopewell Furnace's Historic Housekeeping Plan

**Outreach:** A Hopewell stove was been put on long-term loan to the Central Pennsylvania African American Museum in Reading, Pennsylvania. Cultural Resources responded to 96 researcher requests from outside the park and 29 researcher requests from within the park in FY11. Chief of Cultural Resources Rebecca Ross regularly attended meetings of Berks Heritage Council and Berks Arts Council's Art Managers. Rebecca Ross has served as a backup secretary for Berks Heritage Council.

**Training:** Rebecca Ross and Intern Alex Kuestner attended two-day training on NAGPRA given at Independence National Historical Park on May 25 & 26.

**Exhibits:** Maintenance found a Mission 66 excellent painting of the park's landscape as they were cleaning out the YCC building. Chief of Cultural Resources cleaned and working with maintenance hung the painting in the Visitor Center.

## **Natural Resource Management**

The park's Natural Resource Manager has been working to identify Park Vital Signs through cooperation with Mid-Atlantic Network I&M Program. Dr. James Cominsky continued the mapping of the park's vital signs in 2011.

USGS completed a study of the affects of trace metals on water quality. French Creek EVS standards upheld.

Research on Apple Orchard mortality continued in 2011. USGS completed soil sampling of HOFU Historic Orchard to determine what is causing the rate of apple tree mortality in the park.

The Natural Resource Manager participated this year in the MIDN Science Advisory Committee Meeting.

The Mid Atlantic Exotic Plant Management Team under the leadership of James Akerson, who retired in June and signed up as a HOFU volunteer, has been steadily working to remove exotic species and invasive plants. The GPRA goal to keep 10 acres free of invasives, a fairly small percentage of the park was established for this year and met. The Hopewell Big Woods team has identified the need to work cooperatively on the removal of exotics. A work day was held with 100 students from Alvernia College to remove exotics in Hopewell Village. The students cleared a significant amount of invasives revealing cultural features that were previously hidden by the overgrowth.

With funding from the NPS, US Geological Survey completed its research on the impact of slag on French Creek, a state certified exceptional value stream. French Creek EVS standards were upheld. The second year of the study allowed for USGS to work on water monitoring as part of the project. With the completion of the study the Mid Atlantic Network I&M Program enlisted the Director of Science for Natural Lands Trust Dr. James Thorne to conduct water monitoring throughout the park.

For integrated pest management, the natural resource manager ensured that the required pesticide use reports were completed and permits were obtained for current use. Powder post beetles had become a significant threat to Tenant House 1. After removing the artifacts, the building was fumigated this year.

### **Resource and Visitor Protection:**

- Provided firearms qualification services to VAFO LE employees and to ROVA LE employees.
- Provided firearms training to VAFO and INDE staff.
- Assisted VAFO with deer control program.
- Superintendent's Compendium updated.
- Attended Chief Ranger's Advanced Law Enforcement Refresher Training.
- Pack Test administered to one HOFU employee for Wild land Firefighting qualification.
- Alarm systems maintained and upgraded as needed.

- Law Enforcement assistance provided to French Creek State Park as requested.

## **Safety**

Again there were no lost time injuries in FY 11. We are well on our way to establishing a safety culture. 100% of the staff was trained in Operational Leadership. Safety issues continue to be discussed at the weekly management team meetings as well as the monthly staff meetings. Throughout the year, these issues have been addressed efficiently and adequately to reduce hazards in the workplace and the park for both employees and visitors.

A short safety training film is shown at each monthly staff meeting and, at the conclusion of the film, a group discussion is held concerning the material presented. Both staff and volunteers participate in these meetings.

We were also able to offer a First Aid and CPR/AED challenge for seasonal, part-time, and full-time employees. These challenge courses are designed to allow students with current certificates to renew their certificates for one more year. The challenges were taught by Red Cross instructor Becky Hughes, also a seasonal park employee. 80% of the staff is now Red Cross certified.

The charcoal program continues to be led by the Park Safety Officer and volunteers have demonstrated a continued dedication to the safe facilitation of the program. In 2011 the park held three separate burns, entirely run by volunteer colliers, with no new injuries or other unexpected incidents.

## **Volunteer Program**

We had a slight drop in 2011 to 544 volunteers; but we saw an increase in number of hours from 12,839 hours in 2010 to 13, 874 in 2011.

As in 2010, volunteers contributed to almost all categories of volunteer work, including administration, cultural resource management, interpretation, maintenance and natural resource management.

Of note is the park's expanded Master Gardiner Program. Through the assistance of a dozen individual volunteers, the Friends of Hopewell Furnace designed and constructed a new picket fence around the Ironmaster's Garden. After its completion, the fence was whitewashed to match other picket fencing in the historic area. The fence is now providing much needed protection from foraging animals for the herbs and other plants in the Ironmaster's Garden.

The Master Gardiner's principle partner continues to be the Berks County Career and Technical Center. The school grows the herbs for the park's herb garden in their

greenhouse and the students plant them in the spring. The school program will continue in 2012.



Written, directed, managed, and performed by park volunteers, the play *From Out the Fiery Furnace* was performed to audiences throughout 2011. A video of the play is now available on line and continues to provide inspiration to thousands of people.

The superintendent has focused the Volunteer program to empower volunteers in all aspects of park life. Work continued on improving the Volunteer Bunkhouse, Conference Center and Collier's campus.

A group of volunteers created a quilt again this year as a fundraiser for the Friends of Hopewell Furnace. Tickets were sold off site throughout the year and the quilt was raffled off on December 4<sup>th</sup> during our Iron Plantation Christmas event. There was quilting all throughout the spring, summer, and fall in the village. Staff, volunteers, and visitors were all welcome to participate in the quilting bee, by adding their own stitches to the quilt and learning from experienced quilters. Anyone who helped quilt was asked to sign on a square of fabric which was then attached to the back of the quilt upon completion.

Restoration work on the historic dry stone retaining wall at Hopewell Furnace, sponsored by the Dry Stone Conservancy, was completed in 2011 with hundreds of hours donated by students from the Berks Career and Technology Center; Lebanon County Career & Technology Center; and the Reading-Muhlenberg Career & Technology Center. This year students from the technical college Thaddeus Stevens participated in the program for the first time. Of note one of the college students had actually participated in the program as a high school student in 2008. He was thrilled to be able to come back and show his colleagues his school's work. With community involvement from individuals and from students attending three local vocational schools, Hopewell Furnace has not only made great strides in restoring one of the oldest architectural features in the park, it has also made great strides in achieving the community involvement required for the continued preservation of Hopewell Furnace as a national historic site.

### **Fee Collection**

The park collects 1 a.2g. fees for its living history programs. In 2011, we collected \$7,182.67 from Apple Sales, Farm Sales and Sales from items sold in the store. The park also collected \$520 in fees from special use and commercial use permits.

## Partnerships

The most notable new partnership of 2011 is our work with the Van Alen Institute on The Designing The Parks Program. Designing the Parks is a partnership among several diverse organizations committed to sustaining healthy, vibrant public parks as a core of civic life. The program has developed several design principles. To test those principles, the partners are holding a design competition: Parks for the People. Led by Van Alen Institute, Parks For the People is a collaborative initiative of the [U.S. National Park Service](#), [Van Alen Institute](#), and the [National Parks Conservation Association](#), with support from the [National Endowment for the Arts](#) and [Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy](#). Hopewell Furnace NHS is one of seven parks participating in the program nationally.

The park continued its partnership with the Schuylkill River Greenway Association to work with the park to create interpretive signage for the Baptism Creek National Recreation Trail. The park also continued to work with the Corps of Army Engineers to provide direction to mitigate flooding in the historic complex.

The year marked continued major growth in the capacity of the Friends of Hopewell Furnace. The Friends have become a partner in the Hopewell Big Woods Partnership. With the help of President Dr. Jim Thorne, a mini grant was successfully obtained to see if there are actually Bog Turtles (a federally listed endangered species) in the park.

The Friends also assisted the park's interpretive program by holding several special events including a solar watch and a Halloween celebration. The organization also ran a quilting program which engaged visitors in this historic craft.

In 2011 we worked with 66 partners to increase our connections in the community and for other mutually beneficial endeavors. Our partnership with French Creek State Park has flourished with several joint programs in both interpretation and natural resource management. Hopewell Big Woods continues to be a noteworthy partnership with our neighbors. The majority of our partnerships are professional affiliations such as the Berks Heritage Council (BHC) formerly known as the Berks County Museum Council (BCMC) and the Rural History Confederation (RHC). Highlights of the year's investment in partnership activities are:

- HOFU partnered with VAFO&INDE and the Schuylkill River Greenway Association to bring inner city youth to the park via bicycles. For HOFU, several poverty level Pottstown youth experienced the park for the first time.
- In cooperation with the Pennsylvania Outdoor Lighting Council, launched the Hopewell Big Woods Dark Sky initiative. The park has adopted and adhered to a dark sky policy.



- Partnership with PA State Parks—We continue to keep the PA State Park Director informed of national trends and providing information to NPS parks located in PA. Continued to work closely with DCNR Director Brenda Barrett on a number of projects including the Schuylkill Highlands Conservation Landscape Initiative. Locally, strong daily operational partnership with French Creek Park Manager provides mutual support in all operations.
- NPCA—Held a membership luncheon at the park bringing several first time visitors to experience HOFU. As a result, one of their members donated two 10-plate 19<sup>th</sup> century stoves. The park will now be able to meet its goal of demonstrating cooking on a 10-plate stove.
- PA Highlands--Park continues to contribute to the efforts to preserve a Schuylkill Highlands Greenway Effort is led by the Natural Lands Trust with funding from the William Penn Foundation. Effort is to preserve and link critical areas of Berks and Chester Counties as identified in the Forest Service draft report.
- Berks Arts Council--Participated in BAC's JAZZ FEST to celebrate the park's CCC era. The Exeter Group Community Band provided the music.

Finally, we could not have accomplished our work this year without our internal partners: Valley Forge NHP, Independence NHP, Olmsted Center, Museum Services Center, Mid Atlantic Exotic Removal Team and all the wonderful programs of the NER.

## **Conclusion**

At a meeting of leading preservationists, Barbara Greenfield commented to the State Historic Preservation Officer that she believed in Renaissance. Clearly, Hopewell Furnace has experienced the phenomenon of Renaissance twice in its history: In the 1930s, during the CCC era when the Furnace lands were purchased for creating French Creek National Recreation Demonstration Area and the Mission 66 era when much of the park was restored in preparation of the Bicentennial. Beginning in 2006, we are again experiencing a Renaissance as the park is a centerpiece for two projects: The Hopewell Big Woods and the Highlands Conservation project. With Flexi-Park Base, American Recovery&Reinvestment Funding, the GMP underway, growth in capacity of the Friends of Hopewell Furnace and new partners, the National Park Service has within its grasp the ability to infuse new life into this Historic Site and realize the dream of its creators: a village that is alive with history that is relevant to the American Public.

