

who attempted what others only contemplated, and who was faithful to the dictates of his conscience. He believed in the promise of the Declaration of Independence and anguished over its unfulfillment. However one may judge his means, he sought to realize that promise for black Americans.

John Brown 2000

In May 2000, Harpers Ferry National Historical Park will host a variety of events, including commemorative, educational, dramatic presentations, and interpretative activities that deal with John Brown; his life, within the larger context of the slavery issue; his influence; and his place in history. Included among the many partners sharing in the sponsorship of this event are The Harpers Ferry Historical Association, the Organization of American Historians, the Jefferson County NAACP, the John Brown Heritage Association, and Penn State University, Mont Alto Campus.

These activities will begin on Tuesday, May 9, 2000, with a program commemorating the 200th birthday of John Brown. A specially designed bicentennial postal cancellation will be unveiled by the United States Postal Service and will be available at a USPS cancellation station within the park. Commemorative cachets will be available for the event.

The park will also be hosting a special exhibit, "Before Freedom Came: African American Life in the Antebellum South." Developed as a traveling exhibit by the Smithsonian Institution, the exhibit will be located on the second floor of the John Brown Museum. This exhibit examines the individual, family, and community life of 19th-century African Americans against the backdrop of one of the most tumultuous eras in American history. Musical instruments, tools, household items, objects of spiritual significance, manuscripts, and photos of black Americans—slave and free—are part of this exhibition.

In addition, "Designs for Escape: The Underground Railroad Quilt Code" will be on display throughout the John Brown 2000 event. Dr. Dobard, author of *Hidden in Plain View*, will speak about the underground railroad quilt code and the significance of this code in helping slaves to escape.

Starting Friday, May 12, the park will sponsor a special public education weekend on John Brown for the visiting public. Featured speakers

on May 13th include Dr. Stephen B. Oates, University of Massachusetts, Amherst (ret), Fred Morsell as Frederick Douglass, and a keynote address by The Honorable John Lewis, U.S. House of Representatives.

Several possible dramatic presentations are being considered at this time. One option is the two-act drama by Julia Davis, "The Anvil," based on the trial of John Brown. Another possibility is a stage performance of "John Brown's Body" by Stephen Vincent Benet. Times and dates will be announced once plans are finalized.

On Monday, May 15, a three-day, John Brown 2000 conference will begin. The conference will be held in the Camp Hill district of the park and will be conducted in partnership with the Organization of American Historians. A call for papers went out in the fall of 1999 and closed on January 15, 2000. A final agenda, along with conference registration information, is now available.

These events will help to enhance the interpretation and public education of the story of John Brown and provide historic and contemporary insights into one of America's most controversial figures.

Harpers Ferry National Historical Park Homepage can be accessed at
<<http://www.nps.gov/hafe/home.htm>>.

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Legends of Tuskegee

The Museum Management Program has launched the Legends of Tuskegee web exhibit that commemorates Booker T. Washington, George Washington Carver, and the Tuskegee Airmen. The exhibit features a wide array of related museum and archival collections, as well as quicktime panoramic views of the den and parlor in The Oaks, Washington's residence, and a video on the Tuskegee Airmen. Visit the site at

<www.cr.nps.gov/csd/exhibits/index.htm>.