



**New Museum and Visitor Center to Open at Gettysburg National Military Park**  
*Museum Centerpiece of Rejuvenation Efforts at Landmark Civil War Battlefield Site*

**GETTYSBURG, Pa. February 20 , 2008** – A new museum dedicated to the history of the Battle of Gettysburg in the context of the Civil War will open April 14, 2008, at Gettysburg National Military Park. A joint project of the Gettysburg Foundation and the National Park Service, the museum will join together artifacts, hands-on exhibits, multimedia technology, and archival materials for an interactive, enriching experience that will excite visitors of all ages and instill a deeper understanding of the Civil War, its causes and consequences. The new Museum and Visitor Center is part of a \$125 million fundraising campaign to preserve the historic integrity of Gettysburg.

“Gettysburg is the place where America was saved. In his Gettysburg Address, Abraham Lincoln called for a “new birth of freedom,” said Robert C. Wilburn, president and CEO of the Gettysburg Foundation. “Gettysburg has become our country’s common ground — a reminder that we can come together as a nation, even after the most divisive of conflicts. We want this new Gettysburg experience to inspire visitors about the past, to encourage them to want to learn more about the events that have shaped our country and, in the process, to become better citizens.”

The new Museum and Visitor Center will inspire visitors to learn more about the battlefield and the town’s significance in American history and to connect the battle to their lives today. The \$105 million facility will preserve the National Park Service’s extensive collection of artifacts, objects and archival materials for future generations. It is located adjacent to the battlefield, on land that saw no major battle action, and has been designed to meet silver-level certification in Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) as determined by the U.S. Green Building Council.

“The new museum will better prepare visitors to walk the sacred ground of the Gettysburg battlefield and see it through the soldier’s eyes,” said John Latschar, superintendent of Gettysburg National Military Park.

The 139,000 square-foot Museum and Visitor Center brings to life the Battle of Gettysburg — and the entire Civil War era — with:

- **12 Exhibit Galleries:** The 11 permanent galleries are based on phrases from Abraham Lincoln’s Gettysburg Address, such as “Now We Are Met on a Great Battlefield of that War,” which offers an examination of each day of the Battle of Gettysburg and “The Brave Men Living and Dead,” which presents the aftermath of the battle and its impact on the town. The galleries will tell the story of Gettysburg and the Civil War and provide context to the collection of artifacts and archival materials that include such notable items as Gen. Robert E. Lee’s field camp and a physician’s journal that was used to help loved ones locate the

remains of thousands of Confederate soldiers after the war. The twelfth gallery, the Gilder Lehrman Special Exhibits Gallery, will feature temporary exhibits and broaden the number of topics covered in the museum.

- **Feature Film, *A New Birth of Freedom*:** The 22-minute film, narrated by Academy Award winning actor Morgan Freeman, immerses viewers in the sights, sounds and emotions of the battle and its aftermath.
- **Multimedia Stations:** The sights and sounds of the Civil War are represented in five film galleries featuring short videos about the causes of the war, the three days of the battle, and the outcome of the war; and two Voices Theaters featuring audio programs that convey the stories of the commanders, the common soldiers, the civilians and the correspondents through readings of diaries, letters and newspaper articles from that era.
- **Interactive Stations:** Visitors will learn how to read signal flags, and translate messages being sent from Little Round Top. They will figure out how to respond to different bugle calls. When the order is given to break camp, they will pack their own kit bag for inspection.
- **Computer Resource Room:** Visitors can take history into their own hands and access information about the people, the battle, the collection and the Battlefield monuments.
- **The Ford Motor Company Fund Education Center:** Multipurpose educational facilities — both indoors and out — provide dedicated space for workshops, classroom use and distance-learning programs.
- **Refreshment Saloon:** Visitors can try Civil War-era foods and learn about the vital role played by the volunteers who supplemented government rations.
- **Museum Bookstore:** Offers an extensive selection of Gettysburg, Civil War, and Lincoln-related titles for readers of all ages, as well as gifts and memorabilia.

In addition, the museum will display the only complete cyclorama painting in North America, “The Battle of Gettysburg.” The cyclorama, Paul Philippoteaux’s colossal oil painting that surrounds the viewer, depicts the charge of Confederate infantry led by Gen. George Pickett on July 3, 1863. After nearly a century of deterioration, the Gettysburg Foundation and the National Park Service in 2000 launched a multi-year conservation effort to return the painting to its original glory and create a new gallery for its display. When complete, the Cyclorama will include original elements such as a recreation of the skyline, canopy, and three-dimensional diorama that have been missing for decades. The cyclorama painting will reopen to the public on Sept. 26, 2008.

### **The New Gettysburg Experience at Gettysburg National Military Park**

Beyond the museum, the Gettysburg National Military Park offers a complete immersion in the pivotal Battle of Gettysburg and its resounding impact.

- **The Gettysburg Battlefield and Rehabilitation:** Nearly 1,400 monuments and memorials dot the 6,000-acre site of the largest battle ever fought in North America. The Battlefield, which receives nearly two million visitors annually, is undergoing a multi-year, multimillion-dollar rehabilitation to restore its historic integrity and create a sustainable environment by improving wetlands, water quality and wildlife habitat.
- **Soldiers’ National Cemetery:** On November 19, 1863, at the dedication of this new national cemetery, President Abraham Lincoln delivered the remarks known

today as “The Gettysburg Address.” The cemetery is the final resting place for thousands of American veterans, from the Civil War through Vietnam. It also is the site of numerous monuments and memorials.

- **David Wills House at Gettysburg National Military Park:** Later this year, the David Wills House in downtown Gettysburg will celebrate its grand opening, offering visitors a world-class museum experience that tells the story of Lincoln and the Gettysburg Address. Funded by the National Park Service, the \$6.6 million project will restore areas of the home to their original appearance, including the bedroom where Lincoln stayed and put the finishing touches on his Gettysburg Address.

In addition, the Eisenhower National Historic Site, preserved by the National Park Service, is located adjacent to the Gettysburg Battlefield. Throughout a lifetime of public service, Eisenhower and his wife, Mamie, considered only one place their home — their Gettysburg farm — and it was here that they welcomed scores of national leaders and foreign dignitaries.

### **Visitor Information for the New Museum and Visitor Center**

The Museum and Visitor Center at Gettysburg National Military Park will be open daily — except Thanksgiving Day, December 25 and January 1 — beginning April 14, 2008. Hours of operation will be 8 a.m. – 5 p.m. in winter, 8 a.m. – 6 p.m. in spring and fall, and 8 a.m. – 7 p.m. in summer.

Timed tickets to the new feature film, *A New Birth of Freedom*, will be \$8 for adults (ages 13 and up), \$6.50 for youth (ages 6-12) and free for children (ages 5 and under) from April 14 – September 25, 2008.\*

Beginning September 26, combined admission to the feature film and Gettysburg Cyclorama painting and exhibits will be \$12 for adults (ages 13 and up), \$10 for youth (ages 6-12) and free for children (ages 5 and under).

For more information, visitors can call 866-889-1243 or visit [www.gettysburgfoundation.org](http://www.gettysburgfoundation.org) or [www.nps.gov/gett](http://www.nps.gov/gett) or. For the first time, visitors can also make ticket reservations or book tours online at [www.gettysburgfoundation.org](http://www.gettysburgfoundation.org).

### **About the Gettysburg Foundation**

The Gettysburg Foundation is a private, nonprofit educational organization working in partnership with the National Park Service to enhance preservation and understanding of the heritage and lasting significance of Gettysburg. For more information about the Foundation and its Campaign to Preserve Gettysburg, call 1-866-889-1243 or visit online at [www.gettysburgfoundation.org](http://www.gettysburgfoundation.org).

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\* Dates and prices are subject to change.