

President's House Update

The City of Philadelphia and Independence National Historical Park are one step closer to making the proposed commemoration at the site of the President's House a reality.

Work on the commemoration, *The President's House: Freedom and Slavery in Making a New Nation*, is scheduled to start this summer. This work will include digging to re-expose some of the archeological remains that were uncovered during the archeological dig two years ago. The commemoration is expected to be completed in the summer of 2010.



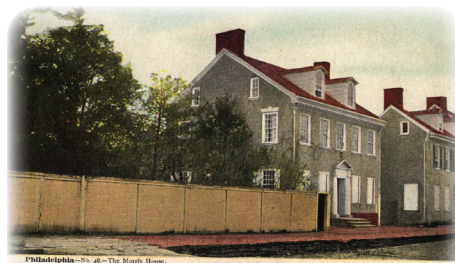
The story of the President's House, at 6th and Market Streets, is a story of many themes: the house and the people who lived and worked there; the Executive Branch of the United States Government; the system and methods of enslavement; African-American Philadelphia; the move to freedom; and, history lost and found.

The commemoration, designed by the Kelly/Maeillo design team, will address each of these themes in creative, educational ways. A major revision in the earlier proposal for the site will be to include a vitrine through which visitors will be able to view the archeological remains of the house, including foundations from George Washington's bow window and the underground tunnel that connected the house to the kitchen.



The Germantown White House

The Germantown White House is almost ready for its grand re-opening this summer. Independence National Historical Park staff and contractors have been working to renovate the Deshler-Morris and Bringhurst houses and install new interpretive exhibits.



Philadelphia - No. 48 - The North House - Painted by J.P. - The original residence of President Washington during portions of 1793 and 1794, with the site of important cabinet meetings.

New exhibits at the Bringhurst House will interpret the outcome of the Battle of Germantown, introduce President Washington's household, including the enslaved Africans who were held by the Washingtons, and link the 300 year history of Germantown with other neighborhood sites and museums. The construction project has included updating the electrical and drainage systems and completing architectural repairs on the original wood and masonry of the houses. In an innovative new feature, geothermal wells have been installed to provide an environmentally friendly heating and cooling system.

In October 1793, the President found refuge in Germantown during the Yellow Fever epidemic in Philadelphia and held four cabinet meetings here. The next summer, the house provided a welcome retreat for the

First Family near Philadelphia, then the Federal Capital. The new exhibits will teach visitors about the nine enslaved Africans kept by Washington while he resided in Philadelphia, continuing the story currently being told at the President's House site at 6th and Market Streets. The exhibits will include the story of the house through the eyes of three women occupants: Martha Washington, granddaughter Nellie Park Custis, and enslaved African Oney Judge.

The Deshler-Morris House gets its name from its first and last owners. David Deshler constructed a small summer house here in 1752. Twenty years later, he built a three story, nine room addition to the front of the house. Isaac Franks, a former Colonel in the Continental Army, purchased the house after Deshler died in 1792 then rented it to Washington. Franks later sold the house to the Morris family who purchased it and retained ownership until Elliston P. Morris donated it to the National Park Service in 1948.

Located at 5442 Germantown Avenue, the site is staffed with the help of the Deshler-Morris House Committee, a group of dedicated volunteers. Anyone interested in volunteering at the House may contact the park at 215-597-1293. An announcement about the grand re-opening for the site will be circulated soon. For now, visit www.nps.gov/demo for more information about the site.