

The David Wills House Gettysburg National Military Park

FACTS and FIGURES

David Wills Facts:

The Wills House was built in 1818 by Alexander Cobean. Wills bought it in 1859.

David Wills was born 1831. He died in his office in the Wills House in 1894.

Wills was an attorney, and served in numerous prominent roles in Gettysburg during his life, including Superintendent of Gettysburg schools, President of the Borough Council, and Adams County judge.

Wills is best known for his role in establishing the Soldier's National Cemetery, and extending an invitation to President Abraham Lincoln to speak at the dedication ceremonies on November 19, 1863.

David Wills and his wife, Catherine Jane (known as "Jennie"), had seven children. She was expecting her fourth child at the time of Lincoln's stay in her home, an evening when she managed a special dinner for 38 guests!

During the battle of Gettysburg, David Wills led some local citizens onto the roof of his home to watch the action.

After the battle, dozens of wounded were sheltered and cared for in the home.

Abraham Lincoln Facts:

Abraham Lincoln was born Feb 12, 1809, and died on April 15, 1865.

Lincoln put the finishing touch on the Gettysburg Address while staying in the Wills House in Gettysburg.

Project Facts:

The David Wills House is on the National Register of Historic Places, is within the boundary of Gettysburg NMP, and became property of the American public when the National Park Service acquired it in March 2004.

The Grand Opening for the David Wills House will be February 12 – 16, 2009, and is endorsed by the Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Commission, a national celebration of Lincoln's 200th birthday.

David Wills House project partners are: Gettysburg National Military Park, Main Street Gettysburg, and Gettysburg Convention and Visitors Bureau

The project is supported by the Gettysburg Borough Interpretive Plan (2000).

The overall cost of the project, including design, is \$ 7.2 million.

Construction began in December 2006. Architects: GWWO of Baltimore; Exhibit designers: Gallagher & Associates of Washington; and Construction: McCoy Brothers, Carlisle, Pa.

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