



News Release

U.S. ARMY SUSTAINMENT COMMAND

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QUARTERS ONE GETS A NEW LEASE ON LIFE

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Rock Island, Ill. – Charles Lindbergh slept there, hundreds of dignitaries visited there, and 38 high-ranking Army officers and their families lived there. Now, Quarters One is about to get a new lease on life.

For more than 136 years, Quarters One on Rock Island Arsenal served as the family residence of the highest-ranking officer serving on the Arsenal. The Victorian Era mansion was known as the second-largest single-family dwelling owned by the federal government, ranking behind only the White House; in later years, however, the upper floors and basement of the home were sealed off, which made the actual living area of Quarters One not much larger than residences at other installations occupied by general officers.

Now that it's been removed from the Army's family housing inventory, though, Quarters One can no longer be ranked among government-owned residences. The building, which has been an icon of the Arsenal and the surrounding Quad Cities community from the day it was completed, stands empty, and future uses for it are being considered.

In the spring of 1872, Lt. Col. Daniel W. Flagler became the first full-time resident of Quarters One. Earlier this year, Maj. Gen. Robert M. Radin, who serves as commanding general of the U.S. Army Sustainment Command, and his wife, Sara, moved out of Quarters One and into Quarters Six, another historic residence on Rock Island Arsenal.



Quarters One has been removed from the family housing inventory, and future uses of the historic residence are being considered.

In the intervening years, Quarters One served as the Arsenal's social hub and hosted a number of individuals whose names can be found in history books (*see accompanying item*). But the ravages of time and the realities of the federal budget caught up to Quarters One, which needs an estimated \$3 million in repairs and upgrades to bring it back to top condition.

While the interior of the residence is in fairly good condition, the limestone exterior walls need extensive repair, as do many of the ornamental features on the exterior. Repairs need to be performed on the roof as well. To meet modern standards, work would need to be done to make Quarters One accessible to the physically disabled. Compounding the expense of having to hire highly skilled and specialized professionals to work on such a building, any repairs and upgrades, especially those made to the exterior, would have to preserve the historic appearance of Quarters One and meet standards set by the State of Illinois Historic Preservation Agency.

A new lease on life for Quarters One may come through the Enhanced Use Lease program, which has been in place since 2001 and which makes property on Army installations available for commercial uses that preserve or enhance the property while maintaining compliance with Army regulations. Leases granted under the program extend for 50 years, and lease payments go directly to the installation, rather than into the federal treasury. This revenue can then be used to make capital improvements or infrastructure repairs in other areas of the installation.

Quarters One is currently being offered under an Enhanced Use Lease in a package with two other properties on Rock Island Arsenal: The RIA Golf Club, which maintains a clubhouse next door to Quarters One and an 18-hole golf course, and a modern golf driving range located near the east entrance to the Arsenal.

At a news conference held on March 25, Joel Himsl, who serves as garrison manager for Rock Island Arsenal, said that the Arsenal hoped to find a partner to enter into a leasing agreement soon, and also hoped to establish a new use for Quarters One by the end of this year.

"We have several proposals that we're considering," Mr. Himsl said, "and we may be close to having a deal."

Mr. Himsl told reporters that the entity leasing Quarters One would be responsible for paying the cost of upgrades, upkeep and repairs. A portion of the proceeds realized through commercial use would be returned to the Arsenal in lease payments, he said, adding that Quarters One and other leased properties could be sub-leased.

“Quarters One could become a ‘bed and breakfast’ of some sort, or be turned into VIP quarters for visiting dignitaries,” Mr. Himsl said. Another potential use of the building, he said, would be to serve as an adjunct to the Rock Island Arsenal Museum, which is located in a separate building and holds a number of artifacts that it does not currently have room to display.

A growing demand for military housing on the Arsenal could impact the future of Quarters One, Mr. Himsl said. The demand is being created by a BRAC 2005 decision that will relocate 1st U.S. Army to Rock Island Arsenal, and by an increase in the number of military personnel assigned to the Army Sustainment Command and other organizations stationed on the Arsenal.

Free public tours of Quarters One are currently being offered. Mr. Himsl said the tours were intended to help spark interest in the historic residence, and solicit new ideas for its future use.

“We want the community to come see what we have to offer at Quarters One and at the Arsenal,” Mr. Himsl said. “We’re really excited about this opportunity, and about what the coming years might hold for Quarters One.”

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