

BATTLEFIELDS MEAN BUSINESS

*Economic Benefits of
Battlefield Preservation*



AMERICAN
BATTLEFIELD
TRUST ★ ★ ★

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“Battlefields are important to communities because they provide a critical link to the history of that area and the entire nation.”

—HON. STEVE ISRAEL
Former Chair of the Congressional Battlefields Caucus

Minute Man National Historical Park
Concord, Mass.
DAVID NGUYEN

BATTLEFIELDS BRING ECONOMIC BENEFITS

AS A NAMED PHENOMENON, “battlefield tourism” may be best known in Europe, where guided tours to sites commemorating the bloodshed of the two World Wars are commonplace. Here in the United States, battlefield tourism is also alive and well.

In 2015, just 10 U.S. battlefield sites hosted 9.7 million visitors. All together, tourism at these 10 battlefields generated \$569 million in sales in local communities, supported nearly 6,800 local jobs and added \$15 million to state and local coffers. For one in three out-of-town guests, visiting the battlefield park was the primary reason for traveling to the area.

No matter how compelling these figures are, they tell only a partial story about how battlefield visitors support local economies. Across the country, the benefits of battlefield parks directly touch local businesses and residents.

BATTLEFIELDS ARE IMPORTANT FOR LOCAL BUSINESSES

Concord, Lexington and Lincoln, Massachusetts, rely on their deep historical roots to attract visitors. The area is steeped in Colonial and Revolutionary history, and in the intellectual “flowering of New England” centered there during the mid-1800s.

Minute Man National Historical Park is a key player in making the cradle of the Revolutionary War accessible to visitors. Each year, the park and local communities host events that tap into that history. The first of these, the one that kicks off the tourist season each year, is Patriot’s Day — a three-day weekend packed with reenactments, demonstrations, family activities, and parades.

Most of the Patriots’ Day weekend events take place on park grounds where the park supervises all of the artillery demonstrations and ensures the safety of the ammunition used in battle reenactments.

MINUTEMAN NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK
REVOLUTIONARY WAR
Concord, Lexington & Lincoln, Massachusetts

FREDERICKSBURG AND SPOTSYLVANIA NATIONAL MILITARY PARK
CIVIL WAR
Fredericksburg, Virginia

In Concord, the Patriots’ Day parade alone is estimated to bring \$250,000 in sales to local retailers, plus revenues at hotels and restaurants.

Fredericksburg, Virginia, is the gateway to Fredericksburg and Spotsylvania National Military Park and its four Civil War battlefields. Since 1986, the Made in Virginia Store has offered visitors to the downtown historic district a fine selection of the state’s edibles, gifts, crafts, and libations — along with tangible pieces of history such as bullets, buttons, pocket knives, and coins. The store serves as an informal visitor center and Civil War museum, where long-time residents who staff the store share their historical knowledge and advice for tourists, directing them to the park and other significant sites.

“From April to September, visitors are here primarily for the battlefields,” owner John Mitchell notes. “We help them make a personal connection with the Civil War. Holding a real bullet in their hands and even being able to buy it and take it home makes a huge impact.”

Across the country, battlefield parks and historical sites provide opportunities for local businesses, support local jobs, attract visitors, and add to state and local government coffers.

BATTLEFIELDS ARE DISTINCTIVE DESTINATIONS

The American Battlefield Trust commissioned The Harbinger Consulting Group to study the economic impacts of tourism at battlefields nationwide. The study focused on selected sites representing the Revolutionary War,

ACROSS THE COUNTRY, THE BENEFITS OF BATTLEFIELD PARKS DIRECTLY TOUCH LOCAL BUSINESSES AND RESIDENTS.

War of 1812, Indian Wars, U.S.-Mexican War, Civil War, and World War II.

The review of more than 20 battlefield parks — 10 of these in-depth — revealed not only the scale of the economic benefits these sites offer, but also some lessons about what makes battlefields distinctive among visitor attractions, and what enhances their economic contributions.

What works for enhancing the benefits of battlefield tourism? The study suggests five lessons:

1. Engage visitors
2. Collaborate with other sites
3. Commemorate events and anniversaries
4. Generate more impact for rural areas
5. Preserve the historical landscape

As a natural outgrowth of commemorating the battles that shaped our nation, battlefields can offer significant economic benefits to neighboring communities.★



BATTLEFIELD TOURISTS BRING EXTRA VALUE
Research shows that Virginia visitors who experience a Civil War site spend twice the amount of other visitors

Fredericksburg & Spotsylvania National Military Park
Fredericksburg, Va.
BUDDY SECOR

“Historic sites like battlefields are one of a kind resources. By embracing them, the community can never become Anywhere, USA.”

— JAMES LIGHTHIZER
American Battlefield Trust president



Waiting for the sunset, Little Round Top
Gettysburg National Military Park, Pa.
LYNN LIGHT HELLER

What works for battlefield tourism: ENGAGE VISITORS



IN 2008, the Gettysburg Foundation opened a new \$103 million museum and visitor center, the centerpiece of a slate of investments to encourage Gettysburg National Military Park visitors to stay longer and spend more money locally.

Revenues from a new “refreshment saloon” and upgraded bookstore and gift shop, combined with museum ticket sales, tours, and other contributions cover the center’s operating costs. Along with the modern, interactive museum, computer resource room, History Channel film, and restored “cyclorama” painting of Pickett’s Charge — all housed in the visitor center — there are other efforts to help visitors immerse themselves in Civil War history.

In downtown Gettysburg, the park opened the David Wills House — where Lincoln put the finishing touches on his Gettysburg Address — to visitors. A multi-year rehabilitation project returned major battle areas to their 1863 appearance. And the “Freedom Transit” trolley now connects downtown Gettysburg with the park.

At Destination Gettysburg, the tourism marketing organization for Gettysburg and Adams County, Pennsylvania, the communications director noted, “Visitors are looking for more than facts

“HERE, THEY CAN IMMERSE THEMSELVES IN THE HUMAN STORIES OF THE WAR.”

and military strategy. Here, they can immerse themselves in the human stories of the war.” Licensed guides share these stories on horseback, bicycle, and walking tours that bring visitors a step closer to history.

Destination Gettysburg highlights the area’s rich history, local restaurants and farm tours, and outdoor recreation — enticing visitors to the renowned battlefield to explore more of the picturesque region.

Are these efforts working? In 2013, the 150th anniversary of the Battle of Gettysburg and the Gettysburg

GETTYSBURG NATIONAL MILITARY PARK
CIVIL WAR
Gettysburg, Pennsylvania

MANASSAS NATIONAL BATTLEFIELD PARK
CIVIL WAR
Manassas, Virginia

PALO ALTO BATTLEFIELD NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK
MEXICAN WAR
Brownsville, Texas

WWII VALOR IN THE PACIFIC NATIONAL MONUMENT
WORLD WAR II
Honolulu, Hawaii

Manassas National Battlefield Park
Manassas, Va.
BUDDY SECOR



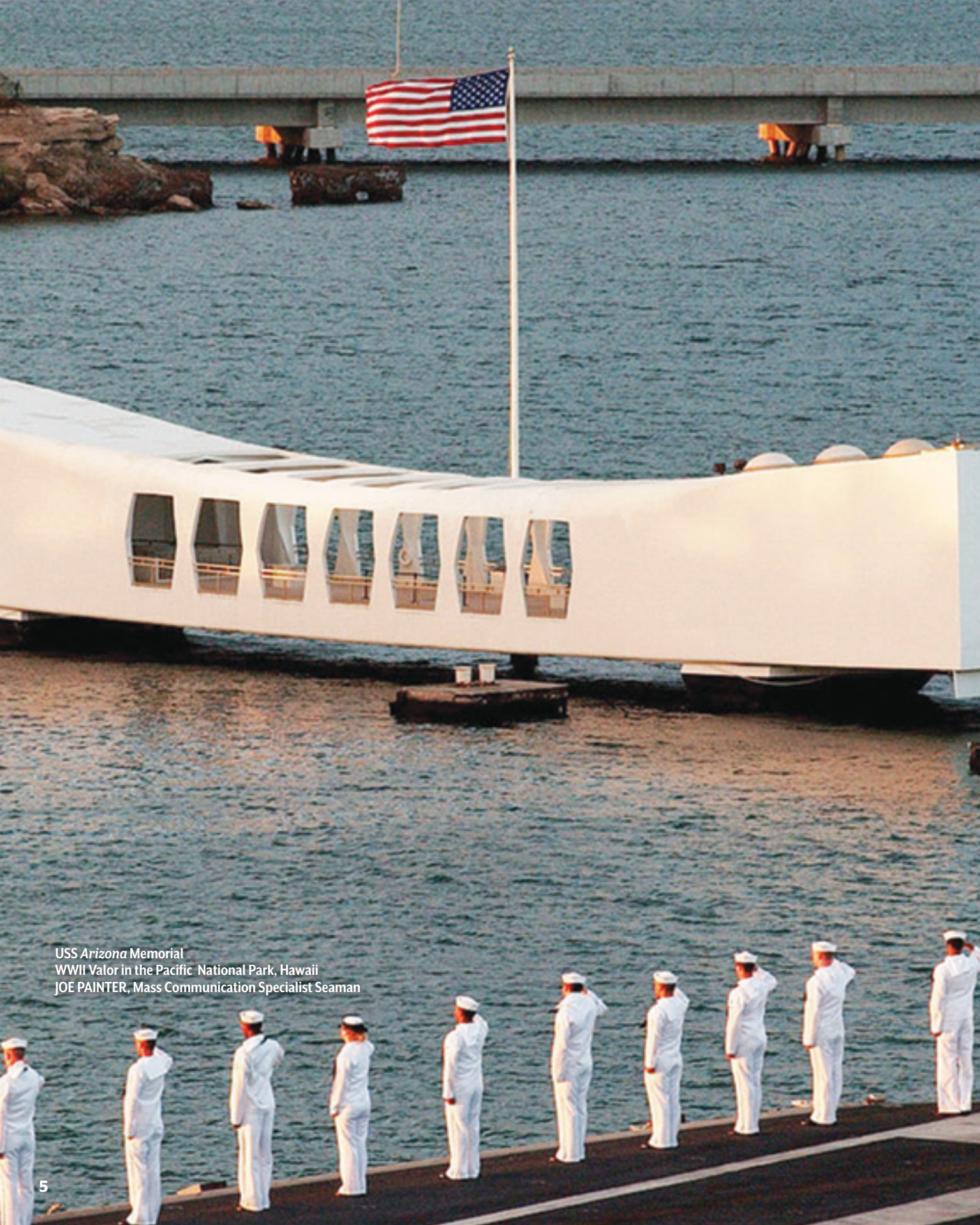
Address attracted the expected extra crowds. Despite a federal government shutdown that closed its gates for two weeks, the park hosted 100,000 more visitors in 2013 than in 2012. And Gettysburg hasn’t slowed down. In 2015, local hotels were even busier than they were during the sesquicentennial year.

OTHER WAYS TO ENGAGE VISITORS

Since 2011, 19 Battle App® guides created by the American Battlefield Trust — 11 in partnership with the Virginia Department of Transportation — have been downloaded 689,000 times. These smartphone and iPad apps, and other online multimedia products, help visitors and virtual visitors explore battle sites.

In the 100-degree heat, some 22,000 visitors attended the 2012 150th commemoration of the Battle of Manassas (Manassas National Battlefield Park, Virginia). Through Facebook and other social media, more than 10 times that number participated.

In 2013, a National Park Foundation grant allowed Palo Alto Battlefield National Historical Park (Texas) to host over 2,600 seventh graders from urban Brownsville. 2015 and 2016 grants focused on fourth graders. During their visits, students shared their ideas for engaging young visitors with park rangers. In the park’s Student Ranger program, high school history students develop lessons about the park and teach them to younger students. “In our urban park,” says superintendent Mark Spier, “we focus on working with low-income kids, and that ripples out to their parents.”★



USS Arizona Memorial
WWII Valor in the Pacific National Park, Hawaii
JOE PAINTER, Mass Communication Specialist Seaman

What works for battlefield tourism: COLLABORATE WITH OTHER SITES



WORLD WAR II Valor in the Pacific National Monument is home to the USS *Arizona* Memorial, iconic symbol of the 1941 Pearl Harbor battle. But, though the *Arizona* is the top visitor attraction on the Hawaiian island of Oahu, three other sites also commemorate the battle: the Battleship *Missouri* Memorial, the USS *Bowfin* Submarine Museum and Park, and the Pacific Aviation Museum Pearl Harbor.

Together, the sites tell a more complete story of the battle than any one does alone. Since 2007, the National Park Service (NPS) — which manages the national monument — has worked with the other sites under the umbrella of the Pearl Harbor Historic District. This collaboration has had numerous successes.

For 10 years, the sites have collectively branded themselves as “Pearl Harbor Historic Sites,” an easy-to-recognize attraction for visitors. “Passports to Pearl Harbor” include discounted admission to all four sites. As an incentive, tour operators receive commissions on the passports. These commissions helped the Historic District sell \$1 million in passports in a six-month span. Passports accounted for 12 percent of visitation to the Pacific Aviation Museum in 2015.

A new NPS visitor center provides a portal to Pearl Harbor, and with a special exemption to normal rules, also sells tickets to the other sites. The sites collaborate on marketing, and maintain a shared website at www.pearlharborhistoricsites.org.

OTHER COLLABORATIONS

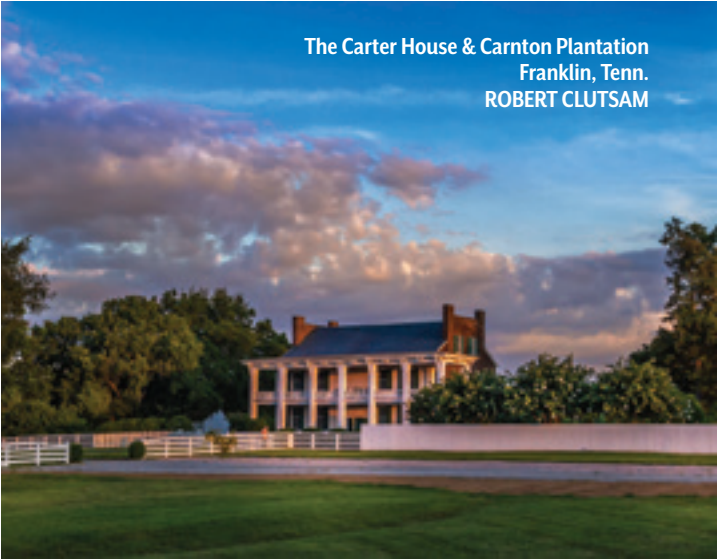
Guilford Courthouse National Military Park (North Carolina) and adjacent museums and recreation areas offer over 1 million visitors a year a unified experience within the Battleground Parks District.

Collaborations helped the Battle of Franklin Trust (Tennessee) double visitation in a decade. The Trust merged two Civil War sites into one attraction. The local visitors bureau helped reach Nashville hotel concierges, who now recommend visiting Franklin and the battlefield to their guests. Some hotels have joined 25 Franklin businesses in earning commissions by selling tickets for the Trust.

The “Things to Do” page on the Kennesaw Mountain National Battlefield Park (Georgia) website — where visitors can connect with other area NPS sites, visitor attractions, sources of visitor information, the downloadable self-guided park tour — receives over 2,000 visits per month.★

“While Hawaii is known for its pristine beaches and beautiful landscapes, our diverse and rich culture and history continue to draw visitors year after year. The World War II Valor of the Pacific National Monument at Pearl Harbor is one of the most popular attractions in the state, which attracts thousands of visitors each day, providing an opportunity to experience a part of Hawaii’s unique history and past.”

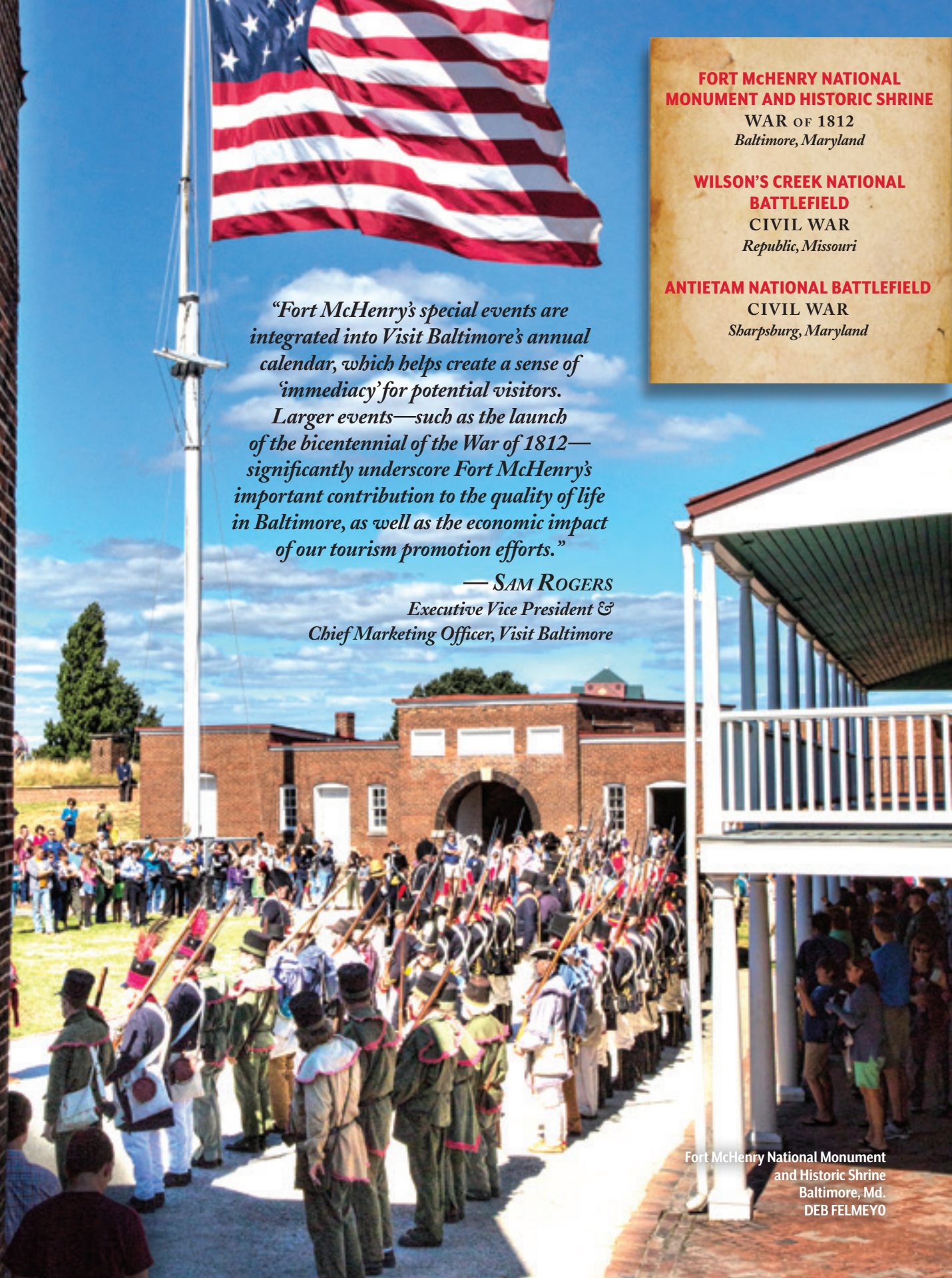
— RONALD WILLIAMS
Hawaii Tourism Authority



The Carter House & Carnton Plantation
Franklin, Tenn.
ROBERT CLUTSAM

INVESTING IN BATTLEFIELD PARKS IS GOOD FOR BUSINESS

At WWII Valor in the Pacific: In 2015, for every dollar the federal government invested in the park’s operating budget, visitation produced \$46 in sales at local businesses.



FORT MCHENRY NATIONAL MONUMENT AND HISTORIC SHRINE

WAR OF 1812
Baltimore, Maryland

WILSON'S CREEK NATIONAL BATTLEFIELD

CIVIL WAR
Republic, Missouri

ANTIETAM NATIONAL BATTLEFIELD

CIVIL WAR
Sharpsburg, Maryland

"Fort McHenry's special events are integrated into Visit Baltimore's annual calendar, which helps create a sense of 'immediacy' for potential visitors. Larger events—such as the launch of the bicentennial of the War of 1812—significantly underscore Fort McHenry's important contribution to the quality of life in Baltimore, as well as the economic impact of our tourism promotion efforts."

— SAM ROGERS
Executive Vice President &
Chief Marketing Officer, Visit Baltimore

Fort McHenry National Monument
and Historic Shrine
Baltimore, Md.
DEB FELMEYO

What works for battlefield tourism: COMMEMORATE ANNIVERSARIES AND EVENTS



BATTLEFIELDS ARE distinctive destinations in part because they lend themselves to anniversaries and other commemorative events that can bring visitors back time after time. Many battlefields host annual or periodic reenactments that bring long-past battles to life, and attract not only the commerce of visitors, but also funds spent locally by participants on hotels, meals, fuel, and other needs.

From its harbor-side vantage in Baltimore, Maryland, Fort McHenry figured prominently during the War of 1812. Today, the Fort McHenry National Monument and Historic Shrine sponsors 10 special events each year, including the annual "Defenders' Day Weekend," which commemorates the War of 1812 and the writing of the Star-Spangled Banner with reenactments, parades, military bands, and fireworks. These events are promoted by the city and the state tourism agencies.

In June 2012, Fort McHenry was a key partner in a six-day "Star-Spangled Sailabration" that kicked off the bicentennial of the War of 1812. More than 260,000 visitors toured tall ships and Navy vessels docked throughout Baltimore's harbor. Fort McHenry hosted a two-day airshow that drew more than 65,000; concerts, food vendors, and exhibitors added to the attractions already in place in downtown Baltimore. The total economic impact of visitation from outside Baltimore is estimated at \$166 million.

MORE ABOUT EVENTS

In Virginia, which had key anniversaries in each year of the Civil War sesquicentennial (2011–2015), more than 3.4 million people attended local 150th anniversary events, including at nine NPS parks.

For the Wilson's Creek National Battlefield Foundation (Missouri) — one of the oldest national park "friends" groups in the United States — public events are key in building community support, raising funds for preservation and improvement projects, and providing educational programs. Annual events held on park grounds include a music festival, a moonlight tour, a new fun run, "Arts in the Park" performances, and an "illumination ceremony" and driving tour in which 2,539 luminaries are placed on the battlefield to represent each person killed, wounded, or missing in the Battle of Wilson's Creek. More than 3,500 reenactors brought the battle to life for tens of thousands of visitors during the 2011 150th anniversary commemoration.★

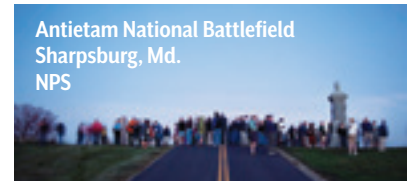


Wilson's Creek National Battlefield, Mo.
ROB SHENK

BATTLEFIELDS ARE TEACHING GROUNDS

Medical response techniques developed at the Battle of Antietam—which saw over 23,000 casualties in a single day of fighting—are the basis of modern military medicine and civilian emergency response.

Since 2004, over 5,000 military doctors, nurses, and medics have studied at Antietam with the nonprofit Letterman Institute.



Antietam National Battlefield
Sharpsburg, Md.
NPS

“Preservation of the Little Bighorn battlefield, coupled with access to other onsite resources, provides historical context that those interested in this important chapter of the American story cannot find anywhere else.”

— **DENICE SWANKE**
Former Superintendent,
Little Bighorn Battlefield National Monument

Little Bighorn Battlefield National Monument
Crow Agency, Mont.
©BOB REECE

What works for battlefield tourism: GENERATE MORE IMPACT FOR RURAL AREAS



LITTLE BIGHORN battlefield — the site of General Custer’s last battle and a momentary victory for Sioux and Cheyenne fighting the U.S. Army to protect their traditional way of life — is rural, even remote by the standards of many Americans.

Located on the Crow Indian Reservation, a one-hour drive south of Billings, Montana, and an hour north of Sheridan, Wyoming, the battlefield hosts some 350,000 visitors a year. But with only 250 hotel rooms in nearby Hardin, most visitors stay in Billings or Sheridan, or pass through on their way to or from the Black Hills or Yellowstone National Park.

Recently, “Bridging Cultures,” an informal dialogue among tribal, business, and government leaders from the region has focused on creating economic opportunities, including for cultural tourism. Leaders spearheaded a proposal for a new Crow cultural center and museum adjacent to the battlefield and near a new rest area that

would provide parking facilities and access to the Interstate freeway.

The official NPS battlefield bus tour concession typically engages nine part-time employees during the six-month tourist season. On a reservation where unemployment and poverty rates are high, these jobs provide a clear benefit from the battlefield. Other local businesses offer traveler services critical in a rural area. These businesses

directly support battlefield tourism through specialized tours, museums, and visitor services such as fuel, meals, and lodging.

Each year, two multi-day reenactments of the Battle of Little Bighorn bring thousands of visitors and reenactors to the area. Some are graduates of an eight-day U.S. Cavalry School course that immerses its paying participants in the real-life of the cavalry during the Indian Wars, culminating in a ride of a lifetime in the reenactment of Custer’s Last Stand. The same school trains military personnel at Little Bighorn, Rosebud, and other Indian War battlefields.

LITTLE BIGHORN BATTLEFIELD NATIONAL MONUMENT

INDIAN WARS
Crow Agency, Montana

CHICKAMAUGA & CHATTANOOGA NATIONAL MILITARY PARK

CIVIL WAR
Georgia and Tennessee

COWPENS NATIONAL BATTLEFIELD REVOLUTIONARY WAR

Chesnee, South Carolina

Chickamauga & Chattanooga National Military Park
Ga. and Tenn.
RANDALL PENNINGTON



MORE ABOUT WORKING WITH RURAL COMMUNITIES

At some rural battlefields, such as Chickamauga and Chattanooga National Military Park (Georgia and Tennessee) and Antietam National Battlefield (Maryland), local farmers lease park lands. These leases help the battlefield parks maintain their rural feel and provide a benefit for farmers.

Annual events at Cowpens National Battlefield (South Carolina) provide a boost for local businesses and nonprofits. The Jaycees chapter sells food at the anniversary commemoration, donating proceeds to local charities. Visitors include Daughters and Sons of

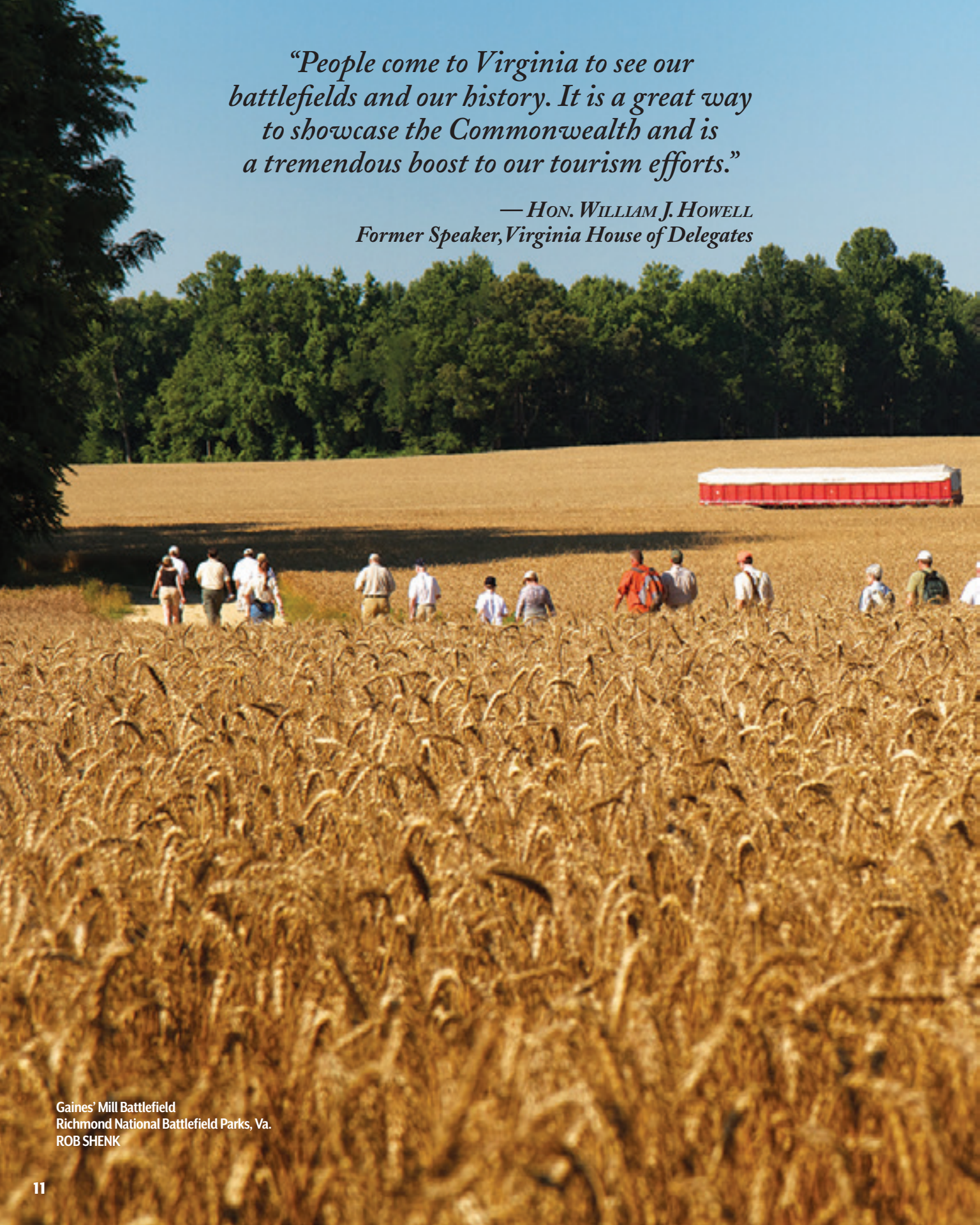
the American Revolution who travel from around the country and stay locally. In 2012, the first year of a new Revolutionary War Weekend, more than 5,000 people visited Cowpens and two other Revolutionary War locations. The event continues annually, providing business for local motels and restaurants.★



Visitors to Vicksburg National Military Park (Mississippi) accounted for 12 percent of all visitor spending in rural Warren County in 2015.

“People come to Virginia to see our battlefields and our history. It is a great way to showcase the Commonwealth and is a tremendous boost to our tourism efforts.”

— **HON. WILLIAM J. HOWELL**
Former Speaker, Virginia House of Delegates



Gaines' Mill Battlefield
Richmond National Battlefield Parks, Va.
ROB SHENK

What works for battlefield tourism: **PRESERVE THE HISTORICAL LANDSCAPE**



N 1996, Richmond National Battlefield Park comprised 754 acres. Today, it encompasses nearly 3,700 acres in and around Richmond, Virginia, once the Confederate capital.

This expansion — made possible through land purchases by the American Battlefield Trust, state and federal funds, and other preservation groups — has helped transform Richmond from what its superintendent calls a “windshield park” into an evolving, interactive historical attraction. Park visitation has more than doubled during its expansion, from 78,000 (1996) to 184,000 (2015).

Unlike many other battlefield parks, Richmond’s story goes beyond a large battle or a single campaign. It includes a naval battle, an industrial complex, the Confederacy’s most famous hospital, dozens of miles of fortifications, and prominent Civil War battlefields.

THE PARK’S VISITATION HAS DOUBLED DURING ITS EXPANSION, UP FROM 78,000 IN 1996 TO 157,000 IN 2012.

At Gaines’ Mill, the original 60-acre battlefield site will soon approach 400 acres, allowing visitors to explore much of the historic landscape. Soon, the site of the Battle of Glendale will be open to the public for the first time. There, park ownership has expanded from a single acre to 639 acres with help from the American Battlefield Trust, which bought and transferred the land to the Park Service.

OTHER PRESERVATION EFFORTS

Saratoga National Historical Park (New York) and other

sites from the Revolutionary War Battles of Saratoga are included in a comprehensive preservation and viewshed protection plan spearheaded by a local land trust.

In 2000, Bentonville Battlefield State Historic Site (North Carolina) included just 138 acres. Now, collaborations among the state, the American Battlefield Trust, and the federal government have expanded it to nearly 2,000 acres. Seven battlefield tour stops offer interpretive panels and cell phone-accessible information, and a new 3.5-mile walking trail is under construction. Visitation grew 158 percent between 2000 and 2015, not counting 65,000 visitors and reenactors at the park’s 2015 sesquicentennial commemoration.★



Saratoga National Historical Park
Stillwater, N.Y.
DOUG MENUEZ

BATTLEFIELD PARKS OFFER A SOLID RETURN ON INVESTMENT

For the 10 parks in this analysis, each dollar of federal government investment in the park’s operating budget yields:

- \$15.90 in sales at local businesses
- 43¢ in hotel and sales tax revenue

“Saving these battlefields and reviving interest in the war that forged our nation is a duty we owe to the brave men who secured our independence and the liberties we enjoy today.”

*—JACK D. WARREN, JR.
Executive Director, American Revolution
Institute of the Society of the Cincinnati*

A 2011 Michigan State University Study demonstrated how a typical family of four spends \$1,000 during a battlefield trip.



Food and Beverages:
\$290



Lodging:
\$240



Shopping:
\$230



Transportation:
\$100



Admissions:
\$80



Other:
\$60

**2015 ECONOMIC BENEFITS
FROM VISITATION AT 10 AMERICAN BATTLEFIELD PARKS**

BATTLEFIELD PARK	WAR OR CONFLICT	2015 VISITORS	LOCAL SALES	JOBS	LOCAL & STATE HOTEL & SALES TAX REVENUES
Colonial National Historical Park, Va.	Revolutionary War	3,343,909	\$67.3 million	993	\$1.2 million
Fort Mchenry National Monument and Historic Shrine, Md.	War of 1812	617,890	\$46.9 million	522	\$808,000
Fredericksburg and Spotsylvania National Military Park, Va.	Civil War	891,917	\$46.7 million	585	\$1.3 million
Gettysburg National Military Park, Pa.	Civil War	1,080,185	\$107.7 million	1,404	\$4.5 million
Little Bighorn Battlefield National Monument, Mont.	Indian Wars	371,783	\$21.8 million	307	\$284,000
Minute Man National Historical Park, Mass.	Revolutionary War	964,331	\$58.1 million	576	\$1.6 million
Richmond National Battlefield Park, Va.	Civil War	184,176	\$15.5 million	156	\$528,000
Vicksburg National Military Park, Miss.	Civil War	532,445	\$34.8 million	430	\$800,000
Wilson's Creek National Battlefield, Mo.	Civil War	161,005	\$8 million	84	\$169,000
World War II Valor in the Pacific National Monument, Hawaii	World War II	1,574,155	\$161.9 million	1,724	\$4.1 million

METHODOLOGY NOTES

Between 2011 and 2013, when this study was originally undertaken, the National Park Service completed a transition in how it produces official estimates of annual economic impacts for Park Service units. During that time, three different methodologies were employed to estimate 2010, 2011, and 2012 impacts, sometimes yielding very different estimates. Estimating impacts for every one of the 400+ National Park Service units is a complex and large endeavor, made more complicated by the lack of visitor data for most parks. ★ The findings detailed in this report are derived using locally relevant data from a variety of sources and guidance from park staff and local tourism promoters to fine-tune the impact calculations. In addition, this study factored in the importance of these battlefield parks in travelers' decisions to visit the area, a variable that the NPS models do not include. These differences often result in estimates that do not match official NPS figures. ★ Parks that were part of the study include Antietam National Battlefield, Battle of Franklin Trust battlefield and historic homes; Bentonville Battleground State Historic Site; Chickamauga and Chattanooga National Military Park; Cowpens National Battlefield; Guilford Courthouse National Historical Park; Kennesaw Mountain National Battlefield Park; Manassas National Battlefield Park; Palo Alto Battlefield National Historical Site; and Saratoga National Historical Park. ★

LEARN MORE: Download the full study at www.battlefields.org/economicimpact

[bat-tle-field tour-ism]

- 1: *the practice of recreational and educational travel to sites related to historic battles*
- 2: *the guidance, management, and accommodation of tourists at battle sites*
- 3: *an opportunity to benefit economically from promoting and accommodating visitation at historic battlegrounds and related sites*



AMERICAN
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TRUST ★ ★ ★

PRESERVE. EDUCATE. INSPIRE.

Vicksburg National Military Park
Vicksburg, Miss.
BUDDY SECOR

Cover photo:
JASON MORRISON

www.battlefields.org