



*Meriwether
Lewis*

**US ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS
and the
LEWIS AND CLARK
BICENTENNIAL COMMEMORATION**



William Clark

Lewis and Clark at the Pentagon

June 7-11, 2004

After Action Report

Background: In 2001, Mr. Darrell Lewis, then Chief, Natural Resources Section, HQ, started discussions with Mr. Bruce Smith from the office of the ASA(CW) in the Pentagon. The intent was to have a Corps of Engineers display highlighting the Army's role in the Lewis and Clark Expedition at the Pentagon. After a very successful exhibit display at the Pentagon in January 2003, the request was made to do another Lewis and Clark program after the beginning of the 2004 events. In January 2004, plans were finalized to have a manned exhibit as well as Captain Lewis' Company encampment at the Pentagon June 7-11, 2004.

Action: Corps Park Rangers Ken Wilk (NWK), Jeff Boutwekll (SWF), Dave Quebedeaux (SAS), Larry Spisak and Pat Kline (both LRP) and TRADOC representative Mr. Steve Allie Director of the Frontier Army Museum (Fort Leavenworth KS) set up an encampment in the center courtyard of the Pentagon. We were informed that this was the first time a group of reenactors was allowed to come into the Pentagon to set up an historic camp. The camp consisted of 1 common tent, which would have been the type used by Captains Lewis and Clark, and one of the three fly tents in which the other men of the expedition would have slept. In addition, each person brought accoutrements that his character would have had with him on the expedition (packs, blankets, sewing kit, journaling supplies, etc). Receiving permission to carry guns from that 1803-06 time period into the Pentagon were Mr. Boutwell, Mr. Kline, and Mr. Quebedeaux (all with replica 1795 Charleville muskets) and Mr. Spisak (with a replica 1794 contract rifle). The men were stationed at various sites around the camp and discussed the equipment and answered questions about it and the expedition as a whole. Mr. Spisak delighted the crowds by playing period music on his fiddle as his character, George Gibson, would have also had one on the expedition.

In addition, Jean Nauss (NWD) along with alternating reenactors from the encampment manned a booth located on the A Ring between Corridors 9&10 just outside the main cafeteria during the above timeframe. The exhibit consisted of 4 parts. The display backdrop consisted of two parts - the Corps of Engineers L&C exhibit background with the Army logo prominently displayed next to a companion backdrop detailing some of the historic aspects of Lewis and Clark expedition. Five paintings that the Corps had commissioned from Michael Haynes, an artist from the St. Louis area, were present and interpreted as well. These paintings are entitled "The Recruitment at Fort Massac"

“Celebration at Independence Creek” “In Pursuit of the Sioux” “Astride the Mighty Missouri” and “Trade at Dismal Niche”,

Also present were a variety of artifacts (primarily medical supplies and topographical instruments) from the 1800-1810 time frame, and numerous brochures.

DA Public Affairs sent out a mass email to everyone in the Pentagon notifying them of the location and topic of the exhibit. On Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday of that week, the exhibit was manned from 9am until 3pm.

Result: In the 18 hours the display and encampment was manned, there were roughly 8,200 interpretive contacts made. (This was over twice the number of contacts that were made at the exhibit in January 2003.) Only those contacts that stopped, asked questions, and engaged in discussions with those manning the booth were counted. Many others, too numerous to mention, briefly glanced at the exhibit or encampment in passing.

Exhibitors met with representatives from each branch of the Armed Forces as well as many civilian personnel within the Pentagon, contractors, and visitors. Mr. J.P. Woodley (ASA(CW)) visited both the exhibit and encampment. There were generals from both the Army and Air Force that visited the booth as well as Navy Admirals. Many visitors to the exhibit early in the week returned later in the week with friends or office workers. Many of the visitors to the exhibit expressed their thanks at having the exhibit and encampment set up and manned for the entire week. We discovered that many exhibits that come to the Pentagon are very static in nature with little or no means of interactivity. In addition to manning the exhibits, interviews also were conducted with the Army News Service.

Lessons learned

1. There is a considerable amount of paperwork that needs to be filed before any exhibit can be allowed into the Pentagon. In addition, this paperwork needs to be filed by a “sponsor” within the Pentagon usually 3-6 months in advance. In our case, all paperwork was filed by the DA Public Affairs starting in October 2003.
2. Setting up a display for 1 week was ample time to reach most employees. There may have been some Pentagon employees that missed the display because of either work requirements or TDY, but even if the exhibit would have been set up longer, there was still possibility that some would be missed.
3. There was an initial problem with the setup of the tents. Pentagon Grounds Maintenance would not allow any tent stakes driven into the courtyard because of the underground sprinkler system. Even though the system was 12 inches underground and the stakes were only to be driven in 6 inches, the grounds crew would not budge. As a result, concrete blocks (shaped and colored like small mounds of dirt) were fashioned by the museum workers at Fort Leavenworth to anchor the tents.

Future outcome: The Corps has already been asked by the ASA(CW)'s office to coordinate another awareness event next year. Next year, they would like to have an expansion of the 1803 military encampment set up outside in the Center Courtyard of the Pentagon as well as an expanded exhibit display.

Final thoughts: In spite of the tremendous effort to do the paperwork, the hassles involved in getting proper clearances, and manning the exhibit the entire week, the overwhelming positive response proved it was well worth the effort.

Respectfully submitted,

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National Lewis and Clark Bicentennial Coordinator