



*Meriwether  
Lewis*

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



*William Clark*

**Headquarters Lewis and Clark Kickoff  
February 17-21, 2003  
After Action Report**

**Background:** At a briefing in February 2002, LTG Flowers brought up an idea that he would like to have a kickoff of the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial for the Headquarters staff. After several dates were discussed, the decision was made to hold the kickoff in conjunction with Engineers Week 2003. In this way, the event would take place after the bicentennial kickoff Signature Event at Monticello in January 2003 but before the next Signature Event in Louisville in October 2003. Gen. Flowers indicated that he would like to see some of the Corps park rangers do the programming using the items in the Discovery Box. This was to accomplish two objectives – highlight the park rangers within the Corps as well as highlight the Corps involvement with the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial.

**Action:** Jean Nauss (NWD) and Ken Wilk (NWK) worked up a plan to enlist the assistance of the park ranger staff nationwide to help give the programming. An application was made available to all park rangers via the InterpNet managed by Kevin Ewbank (MVR). Responses totaled 38. The applicants were initially rated on the number and kinds of interpretive programming they have done in the past, their use of interpretation as one of their TAPES performance standards, their general interest in Lewis and Clark, and whether they had the support of their supervisor. After all of the applications were screened, those with the top 15 scores underwent telephone interviews where they were asked specific questions about their programs, their biggest challenge, and their specific interest in doing HQ programs regarding L&C. The top 10 park rangers were selected as the HQ kickoff team. They were Pat Kline (LRP), Alana Kirkpatrick (MVS), Jeff Boutwell (SWF), Jeanne Newton (NWW), John Derby (LRP), Robin Norris (NWP), Tim Bischoff (MVS), Heather Burke (NWW), and Dave Quebedeaux (SAS). (Carol Ryan (MVS) was also selected but because of the weather and other job commitments, she was unable to attend.) As can be noted, these rangers are from all over the country not just along the route taken by Lewis and Clark. That is in keeping with Gen. Flowers wish to show off the park ranger staff nationwide.

Programming that week was to be in four venues: School programs, the Chief's message, HQ programs and HQ exhibit.

1. School programs - Four schools in the DC area were to have special Lewis and Clark programs. They were Steward Hopkin Middle

School, Burrville Elementary, Backus Middle School and Thomas Elementary. Programs at the elementary schools were scheduled for ½ day while the middle school programs would be for the entire day as classes rotated through the speaker areas.

2. Chief's L&C Message - The kickoff for HQ was a speech from Gen. Flowers to the HQ staff. The intent of the kickoff was to have General Flowers discuss the importance of the Army to the Lewis and Clark Expedition; highlight the 7 Army values that made the expedition a success, and show how those same values can be found in the Corps park rangers today.
3. HQ programming – Interpretive talks by the park ranger team were held on 45-minute intervals starting Wednesday afternoon 12:30pm through 3:30pm then Thursday and Friday from 8:30am-3:30pm. The following talks were given.
  - a. John Derby (LRP) – “Selfless Service During the Lewis and Clark Expedition”
  - b. Jeanne Newton (NWW) – “They Wrote it Down – Journaling in the Corps of Discovery”
  - c. Dave Quebedeaux (SAS) – “Diplomatic Efforts of the Corps of Discovery”
  - d. Jeff Boutwell (SWF) – “What Did Lewis and Clark Really Discover?”
  - e. Robin Norris (NWP) – “Married Men, Gentlemen’s Sons and Romantics Need Not Apply – Recruitment for the Expedition”
  - f. Alana Kirkpatrick (NWS) – “Blood, Sweat, and Fears – the Hardships of the Expedition”
  - g. Pat Kline (LRP) – “Duty, Honor, and Respect in the Corps of Discovery”
  - h. Heather Burke (NWW) – “Native American Contributions to the Success of the Expedition”
  - i. Tim Bischoff (MVS) – “George Drouillard – Indian Sign Talker” (a first person interpretation)
4. COE L&C Exhibit – The exhibit was set up outside of Gen. Flowers’ office. The L&C banner was hung above the Chief’s entryway doors with the exhibit and backdrop off to the left. On the display table were items from the Discovery Box, project brochures, and other brochures from the Corps various L&C efforts. The exhibit backdrop, the same one used at the Pentagon L&C Kickoff in January 2003, consists of the Army L&C logo prominently display over a background of Williams Clark’s map of the country. There are also photos of the historic and modern Army as well as a listing of the 7 Army values. Those park rangers not giving programs at the time manned the exhibit.

**Result:** Each venue will be discussed separately.

1, School programs – This was the first casualty of the snowstorm. The week that this programming was to go on was the same week that Washington DC received 20 inches of snow. Therefore, schools were cancelled for the entire week and no school programs were given. However, several of the park rangers (Tim Bischoff, Alana Kirkpatrick, Heather Burke, John Derby, and Robin Norris) took it upon themselves to go to the GAO Day Care and did some interpretive programs there to make the best of a poor snow-laden situation. This unplanned presentation shows the adaptability of our NRM park ranger staff. The day care staff thought it was wonderful for them to come and visit. The children had an absolute blast during the program. The team worked flawlessly in the impromptu program...without any prior planning, each ranger gave a program on the item that they brought from the Discovery Box. The others assisted without any interruption of the flow of the presentation. Brief program notes:

1. Introduction: Who are Lewis and Clark? What is an explorer? (Tim w/ assist from others)
2. The soldier's hat: Soldiers went on the trip. Bear fur and deer tails. (Alana w/ assist from others)
3. Beaver Fur: Made hats out of the fur. Importance of the beaver.
4. Prairie Dog: What is a prairie dog? Barking squirrel. How did they catch one? (John spoke like a prairie dog- the kids screamed and rolled on the floor with laughter) Who did they send it to? (Tim, John, w/ assist from the others)
5. Grizzly bear paw and claw: What is a bear? The differences between a black bear and grizzly. (John stood up to show the size of a black bear) Harder to kill a grizzly bear! (Robin w/ assist from others)
6. Indian sign language: taught signs for eat, drink, full, name, etc. Importance of being able to talk to the people you meet. (Tim w/ assist from others)
7. What does a ranger do? Junior ranger hats and safety badges. (Heather w/ assist from others)
8. Passed out Lewis and Clark stickers to all children and adults.

This may have been an unplanned event, but it was an excellent program that was greatly appreciated by the Day Care staff. This impromptu program shows the caliber, innovativeness, and adaptability of the Corps park ranger staff.

2. Chief's Kickoff – This was very well received by the HQ staff. For his remarks given in the main conference room, Gen. Flowers wore an 1803 period uniform replica and portrayed Col. Jonathan Williams, Chief Engineers at the time of the expedition. After talking about the role of the Corps and Army in the Expedition, he proceeded to discuss the role of the park rangers. At the conclusion of his remarks, he presented each of those park rangers present with a Commander's Coin. Gen. Flowers' enthusiasm for the entire Lewis and Clark Bicentennial showed throughout his talk. Talking with HQ staff after the Chief's talk (plus reading their faces as he came into the room) they were surprised that the Chief was not in his regulation "Greens". Those that could not attend in person had the opportunity to watch the proceedings on IPTV – unfortunately, the sound quality was very poor.

3. HQ programs – Although the room was full for the Chief's kickoff, attendance at the individual presentations was disappointing. Although the presentations were given by the park rangers at various times throughout the 3 days at 45-minute intervals, the most attendees at any one session was about 20. Needless to say the park rangers were very

disappointed in the turnout. Although most of the attendees were interested in the program they attended, there was one person who came to most of the talks and read the newspaper the entire time! The park rangers spoke on a wide variety of topics (listed above) and the style of the presentation varied with each ranger. Some were comfortable with more of a lecture format, others enlisted the help of volunteers from the audience, while still others acted out characters and animals of the expedition.

4. L&C Exhibit – The exhibit had considerable walk-through traffic. Many Corps employees stopped to engage the park rangers about the expedition and/or the contents of the Discovery Box. Some were on their way to another destination and happened by. Others made a special point of coming down to the Chief's office just to see the exhibit. This also gave the ranger the opportunity to talk about their projects, their specific jobs, and the kinds of outreach they do on a routine basis. On the last day of the setup, Col. Schroedel (Chief of Staff) presented each of the rangers with Corps Castle pin with the American flag as a token of his appreciation for all of their hard work and effort.

### **Lessons learned**

1. Although it was a great idea to have the kickoff during Engineers Week, there were several issues not in our favor. First, having a Monday holiday and second, planning anything during the winter is always dependant on the weather. Federal offices were closed on Monday for the holiday and again on Tuesday because of the snow. By Wednesday, some folks were back to work while others were still digging out. Those that did make it in to HQ, started out Wednesday by being 2 days behind and, on top of that, now having to cover for co-workers who were not yet able to make it in to work. That may have accounted for much of the low HQ participation as opposed to a lack of interest.
2. Many people in HQ were not even aware that the Corps had park rangers. Quite a few thought the rangers at our projects were with the National Park Service!!! We need to do a better job of “advertising” the park ranger staff in-house. One idea may be to do a series of articles in the Engineer Update on the park ranger program.
3. Having the school programs is a wonderful idea. However, one person needs to make all of the arrangements. One in HQ initially contacted schools but he didn't have the benefit of knowing what questions to ask to ensure a successful program. As a result, schools were still being called the Friday before the programming was to start to firm up the plans as opposed to confirming the plans. Next time, one person from the L&C team should be the sole point of contact.
4. Because of the school cancellations, no programming was accomplished. It would have been nice to have some “alternate” week scheduled. Rescheduling may be a possibility for sometime in the spring. However, as many of the DC schools have used up their snow days and will be running

school into June to cover all of the required material that may not be an option.

5. It was a great idea to have 10 park rangers to do programming for HQ and schools the entire week. However, if either HQ or school programs are done again, I would recommend not running them during the same week and having no more than 5 park rangers brought to DC for either event.

**Future outcome:** Having a Lewis and Clark Kickoff event in HQ was great idea. In fact, the NRM staff should plan on having park rangers come into HQ to do some kind of programming each year. There are a lot of facets to the NRM program...we have foresters, endangered species experts, fisheries biologists...a lot of park rangers well versed on a variety of topics. The subject matter could vary but this could help highlight the ranger staff and stress the important job that they have as the primary customer contact.