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Connecticut Monument Dedication



Virginia DuBow

Connecticut Monument**Date:** October 10, 2008**Contact:** **Terrence J. Winschel**, (601) 619-2908**Connecticut Monument Dedication**

The Connecticut Monument at Vicksburg National Military Park will be formally dedicated on Tuesday, October 14, at 10:30 a. m. The event will be held at the park's Grant's Canal Unit off old U.S. Highway 80 near the Village of Delta in Madison Parish, Louisiana. Those attending the event from Vicksburg should take the Delta Exit (Exit 186) off Interstate 20 West, turn right, then right again onto U.S. Highway 80 and follow the signs to the park's Grant's Canal Unit.

Vicksburg National Military Park was established in 1899 to commemorate the campaign, siege, and defense of Vicksburg during the Civil War. Boasting of more than 1,330 monuments, markers, tablets, and plaques, the park is one of the most densely monumented battlefields in the world. The monuments of stone and bronze that dot the park landscape were executed by the foremost American and European artists of the late nineteenth—early twentieth centuries and have made Vicksburg, in the words of one Civil War veteran, "the Art Park of the world."

The park's newest monument honors the gallant soldiers of the Ninth Connecticut Volunteer Infantry who labored to construct a canal across the base of De Soto Point, opposite Vicksburg, in the summer of 1862. It was hoped by Union officials that this canal would create a channel for navigation and enable vessels to bypass the powerful Confederate artillery batteries mounted on the high ground at Vicksburg. The effort, however, failed as Union soldiers quickly fell victim to heat exhaustion, exhaustion, sun stroke, malaria, and various fevers that took a heavy toll of human life, including the lives of 153 men from Connecticut.

The Connecticut Ninth Regiment Monument Committee was authorized by Governor M. Jodi Rell in 2005. This committee, in conjunction with the Connecticut Irish-American Historical Society, secured approval from the National Park Service to place the monument at the park's Grant's Canal Unit. The black granite monument features the State's Coat of Arms, the crest of the Ninth Connecticut Infantry, and faces of men of the regiment who labored on the canal all of which were hand etched by Stacy Mathieu of Mathieu Memorials.

Robert O. Larkin of Chesire, Connecticut, is chairman of the monument committee and has spearheaded this effort since its inception. The great-great-grandson of John Marlow of New Haven, who served in the regiment, Larkin will serve as master of ceremonies. The monument will be presented to the National Park Service on behalf of the State of Connecticut by Karen Senich who is executive director of the Connecticut Commission on Culture and Tourism. The monument will be accepted on behalf of the United States by park superintendent Monika Mayr. Tom Callinan, the State Troubadour Emeritus of Connecticut, will sing two original songs composed for the dedication.

For additional information, please call the park office at 601-636-0583.

**Did You Know?**

Jefferson Davis had served as a United States Congressman, Senator, Secretary of War and war hero before being called upon to accept the Presidency of the Confederate States?