



VALLEY FORGE PARK ALLIANCE

Inspiring appreciation for and citizen stewardship of Valley Forge Park since 1976.

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E-News - December 31, 2024



National Park Service Announces 2025 Free Admission Days

Come experience the national parks! All National Park Service sites that charge an entrance fee will offer free admission to everyone (other fees, including timed entry or reservation fees, may apply). Mark your calendar for these entrance fee-free dates:

- **January 20:** Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
- **April 19:** First day of National Park Week
- **June 19:** Juneteenth National Independence Day
- **August 4:** Anniversary of the Great American Outdoors Act
- **September 27:** National Public Lands Day
- **November 11:** Veterans Day



Valley Forge Stories: Elizabeth Thompson

General George Washington needed a housekeeper for many reasons, and one of the more important reasons was frequently moving his residence for security purposes. After one housekeeper was promptly removed as she may



have been involved in an attempted plot to kill George Washington, he found Elizabeth Thompson, who had excellent work credentials.

Although she was illiterate, she quickly took full control of many of Washington's domestic household staff. She interacted well with Martha Washington whenever she was present at any of the camps or homes with Washington. Thompson would be trusted to maintain any necessary secrecy in connection with any new location or travel plans. The fact that she remained in this position for five years is a testament to the trust placed in her by General Washington. There are

no known paintings of her.

For the full story on Elizabeth Thompson, General Washington's Housekeeper and Confidant, please visit www.valleyforgemusterroll.org/valley-forge-stories/.

Kennedy Supplee Mansion Leasing Opportunity

We have some exciting news! The Kennedy Supplee Mansion is available for a ten-year lease beginning as early as January 2029 following a comprehensive rehabilitation by the National Park Service. Allowable uses include restaurant, other light commercial use, or office. A Request for Proposals is scheduled to be released in January 2025. Check out the full story [here](#).



A Brief History of the Mansion

Constructed in 1852, the Kennedy Supplee Mansion is a Victorian mansion in the Italianate-Italian style villa featuring Egyptian Revival interior decorations. It is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

In 1986, Kennedy Supplee Associates LP (KSA) signed a 55-year lease with the National Park Service, restored the building, and operated it as the Kennedy Supplee Mansion Restaurant. Following the 1987 renovation by KSA, the restaurant operated with approximately 1,100 square feet of dining space located on the first and approximately 2,200 square feet of dining and bar space on the second floor. The company entered Chapter 11 bankruptcy in 2005 and the mansion has been vacant since 2006.

Two More Chances to Volunteer with Weed Warriors This Winter

Join the Weed Warriors and assist Natural Resource

Management in protecting and restoring native plants, controlling invasive plants, and contributing to the overall health and biodiversity of the park!



Volunteers assist with a variety of tasks associated with vegetation management; specifically removing non-native, invasive vegetation (cutting and hand-pulling), preparing for and planting native species (raking thatch, collecting and spreading seed, planting plugs), and protecting native vegetation from deer (installing fencing).

- Saturday, January 11 from 9:00am – 12:00pm
- Tuesday, January 14 from 9:00am – 12:00pm

Events are limited to 15 volunteers for each Weed Warriors, so please RSVP to Ashley Kroon, Biological Science Technician, at 610-783-1047 or ashley_kroon@nps.gov.

Volunteers under age 18 must participate with an adult.

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