



PAMPLIN HISTORICAL PARK & THE NATIONAL MUSEUM OF THE CIVIL WAR SOLDIER

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Civil War Santa Comes to Pamplin Historical Park

Pamplin Historical Park & The National Museum of the Civil War Soldier will be offering special programming November 25-26, the weekend after Thanksgiving and weekends in the month of December.

During the Civil War, Christmas was a traditional festival celebration in the United States, although not yet an official holiday. In 1862 while America was deeply entrenched in the Civil War, Thomas Nast drew the image popularly recognized as Santa Claus for *Harper's Weekly*. Nast's illustrations gave hope to Union soldiers during the dark and dreary times of war. Santa appeared as a kindly figure representing Christmas, the holiday celebrating the birth of Christ. However, Santa Claus appeared melancholy, sad for the separation of soldiers and their families, as well as for the faltering Union war effort.

“Civil War Santa,” patterned after the original illustrations by Thomas Nast, will appear at the National Museum of the Civil War Soldier on November 25 and 26 during the following times: 9:30a.m. – 11:30 a.m., and 12:20 p.m. -3:30 p.m. Special demonstrations this weekend includes the noon King of Battle Artillery Demonstration, plus afternoon programs including the Lay of the Land Tour, Breakthrough Tour and Load in Nine Times Demonstration.

Visitors will also have the opportunity to write letters to U.S. military personnel on active duty in Afghanistan and Iraq by participating in the 4-H Operation Military Kids letter-writing project, daily from November 25 until December 31, except for December 25 when the Park is closed.

Throughout the month of December additional weekend programming will include the preparation of holiday foods. Visitors will be able to decorate gingerbread cookies and design ornaments with costumed living history interpreters and take home what they have created.

Pamplin Historical Park is located in Dinwiddie County, Virginia, 31 miles south of Richmond. The 422-acre privately owned Park contains four museums, four historic structures, and more than three miles of walking trails through the April 2, 1865 Breakthrough Battlefield. For more information, visit www.pamplinpark.org or call 804-861-2408.