

Mary A. Bomar

"People, Parks, and Policy - 'America's Best Idea' Turns 100"

Mary A. Bomar became the 17th Director of the National Park Service on Oct. 17, 2006. She leads a team of 20,000 employees and 140,000 volunteers in administering 391 national park units and related cultural and natural heritage programs. The parks welcomed more than 275 million visitors in 2007.

"There are special places that unite us all as Americans," she states, "and national parks are those places. From iconic parks like Yellowstone and Gettysburg to places like the African Burial Ground and Rosie the Riveter, our national parks truly reflect the soul of America."

"The National Park Service is more than parks alone. We also provide assistance to communities working on restoring rivers, building trails, or making local parks flourish. We survey historic buildings, landscapes and roads to preserve their images for future generations, and we certify historic rehabilitation projects to qualify them for federal tax credits."

Director Bomar has three overarching goals for the National Park Service:

- Re-engage the American people with their national parks
- Increase the capacity of the system
- Prepare the next generation of leaders for our parks.

As the first naturalized citizen to hold the position, Director Bomar was born and raised in England, and calls Leicestershire home. As a young girl, she traveled with her family and lived for a time in the United States, where her family visited many national parks, including the Grand Canyon, Petrified



Mary Bomar, 17th National Park Service Director

Forest and the Statue of Liberty. "One of my earliest memories is sailing into the New York Harbor and watching the Statue of Liberty seem to rise from the water, little knowing I would one day have a role in her stewardship."

Throughout her career, Director Bomar has held varied leadership positions. She joined the National Park Service in 1990 after spending over 12 years as a senior manager with the United States Air Force. Selected as Regional Director of the NPS Northeast Region in July 2005, Director Bomar led the strategic planning, management and operation for more than 100 parks and areas of national significance plus numerous technical assistance and partnership programs in the 13-state region, including Independence National Historical Park, the Statue of Liberty, Gettysburg, Shenandoah and Acadia National Parks. The area is one of the most heavily-visited of the seven NPS regions with more than 50 million visitors each year and an annual economic impact of over \$2.6 billion. The region contains 17 of the country's 37 National Heritage Areas.

Director Bomar served as superintendent of Independence National Historical Park in Philadelphia from 2003-2005. There she presided over what was termed the "largest urban redevelopment project in America," a \$314 million reconstruction of Independence Mall. The project included the relocation of the Liberty Bell to its new home in the Liberty Bell Center. She strengthened partnerships with the Independence Visitor Center and National Constitution Center which are also housed in new facilities within the park. She also successfully launched the Independence Park Institute, a program meeting the needs of schoolchildren who visit the "Cradle of Liberty." During her tenure, visitation at the park soared over 33 percent to 4 million annual visitors.

In 2000, Director Bomar was Superintendent of Oklahoma City National Memorial during start-up operations. There, she worked with a 350-member task force of family members, survivors, rescue workers and the public to plan and open an outdoor memorial. She was also named the first NPS State

Coordinator for Oklahoma. In that role, Director Bomar coordinated activities at Oklahoma City, Washita Battlefield National Historic Site, Chickasaw National Recreation Area, Historic Route 66 and the Trail of Tears National Historic Trail with other federal, state, city and local partners and the Cherokee Nation. In July 2001, Director Bomar's responsibilities increased when she assumed managerial responsibility for Washita Battlefield National Historic Site in Cheyenne, Oklahoma.

Director Bomar's National Park Service career began in the financial arena at Amistad National Recreation Area, Texas, where she became chief of administration. During her four-year tenure at Amistad, the NPS took advantage of her management expertise, assigning her a portfolio as a management circuit rider, assisting many national park sites in the Southwest.

In January 1994, Director Bomar accepted a management position at San Antonio Missions National Historical Park—home to the largest collection of Spanish Colonial resources in the United States—and was promoted to the position of Assistant Superintendent. Before her move to Oklahoma, she completed a detail as the Acting Superintendent of Rocky Mountain National Park in Colorado.

Prior to her National Park Service career, Director Bomar worked for the United States Air Force in the Morale Welfare and Recreation Program at various bases in the United States and Europe, and as a member of the Inspector General team. She was recognized for her efforts as the Air Force MWR Female Manager of the Year (1986) and Air Force Worldwide Recreation Manager of the Year (1987).

Director Bomar's awards also include the Superior and Meritorious Service Awards; the NPS Intermountain Region Charismatic Leadership Award and the Philadelphia Hospitality "Good Scout" Award presented by the Cradle of Liberty Council, Boy Scouts of America. In 2008, she was named by President Bush to lead the U.S. delegation to the state funeral of Sir Edmund

Hillary, the New Zealander who was the first man to reach the summit of Mount Everest.

Director Bomar serves on numerous boards as part of her official duties, including the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation; American Folklife Center; Committee for the Preservation of the White House (Chair, with First Lady Laura Bush as Honorary Chair); Ford's Theatre Society; John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts; National Park Foundation (Secretary); White House Historical Association; Wolf Trap Foundation for the Performing Arts and the National Trust for Historic Preservation.

The proud spouse, mother and mother-in-law of career military members, Director Bomar and her husband Milton make their home in northern Virginia. Their two sons and daughter along with their spouses, and seven grandchildren, all reside in the Great State of Texas.