



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Fredericksburg and Spotsylvania
National Military Park
120 Chatham Lane
Fredericksburg, Virginia, 22405

National Park Service News Release

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Santa Claus is Coming....to Chatham

FREDERICKSBURG, VA — The National Park Service is pleased to announce a holiday open house at the Fredericksburg and Spotsylvania National Military Park. The annual event at historic Chatham will be held on Sunday, December 19 from 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

The program will feature living historian Kevin Rawlings, who will appear as Civil War-era Santa Claus, a figure based on Thomas Nast's 1860s representation of the then-emerging Christmas icon. Children, in particular, will wish to visit with Santa, whose holiday attire will be noticeably different than that worn by Santa Claus today.

Kevin Rawlings is widely considered to be the nation's foremost expert on Christmas during the Civil War. Both genial and historically accurate, he has received wide acclaim for his portrayal of Santa Claus. At 1:00 p.m., Rawlings will present a program of approximately 40 minutes for a target audience of adults and older children, addressing the background and history of Santa Claus and how his image has changed over the years. Then from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. he will visit one-on-one with the younger children.

Chatham will be decorated with candles and traditional greenery for the occasion, and volunteers will be on hand to pass out refreshments. Throughout the program, the musical group "Evergreen Shade" will perform period songs appropriate for the season. Children are also welcomed to participate in a holiday scavenger hunt.

All activities are free to the public. Chatham is located at 120 Chatham Lane, Fredericksburg, VA 22405. To reach Chatham from downtown Fredericksburg, travel east on Business Route 3 (William Street) and take the Chatham Bridge across the Rappahannock River. At the first traffic light turn left onto Route 218 (Chatham Heights Road). Travel one block and turn left again at the brown NPS sign for Chatham.

For further information about this event, call the National Park Service at 540-373-6122.

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