U.S. Department of the Interior

Missouri

Jefferson National Expansion Memorial

History, by apprising the people of the past, will enable them to judge of the future; it will avail them of the experience of other times and other nations; it will qualify them as judges of the actions and designs of men . . . —Thomas Jefferson, 1782

PORTRAIT/ WHITE HOUSE HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION
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The riverfront beneath the Gateway Arch often hosts festivals, historical events, and concerts. The soaring Arch is both a memorial to westward expansion and an icon of the city of St. Louis.

GATEWAY TO THE WEST

The Gateway Arch is a memorial site where you can contemplate the epic mass-migration and settlement of the American West during the 1800s. Thomas Jefferson estimated that it might take 1,000 generations for Americans to fully extend across the vast continent. Instead, in fewer than 90 years what Americans called the frontier had ended.

From the time America was first settled by Europeans, it was seen as a place of inexhaustible land and resources—that just beyond the fringe of "civilization" there was land to create a better life for daring and hardworking people. Many embraced Manifest Destiny, a phrase coined in 1845 to explain America's thirst for expansion. It was a new term but not a new idea. Since the beginning of the republic, leaders and citizens had aggressively claimed land for the United States.

Manifest Destiny crystallized the idea that it was God's will and the right of Americans to take over the continent. Then, in 1893, historian Frederick Jackson Turner reported that the land he called the "frontier"—where there were fewer than two people per square mile—was gone. This concept stunned Americans because Turner also said that our unique American character stemmed from this frontier experience. The idea of this loss of the frontier still pervades our literature, art, and movies.

Jefferson National Expansion Memorial was designated a national historic site in 1935 to honor the type of frontier hero that Turner wrote of in 1893. But Turner's view of history was Anglo-centric; it ignored American Indians, African Americans, and Spanish, French, Russian, Asian, and other explorers and settlers who lived in the West long before the mass migrations. Today the park pays tribute to the multicultural aspect of the peopling of America. Its centerpiece, the Gateway Arch, stands for the many cultures that made the American West what it is today.

BACKGROUND PHOTO BY CHAD COBB (CC BY-SA 3.0), WIKIVE

Architect Eero Saarinen and long-time collaborator Dan Kiley, a master of modern landscape architecture, designed the landscape surrounding the Gateway Arch. The tree-lined walks, rolling hills, reflecting ponds, and grand staircase descending to the Mississippi River mirror the shape of the Arch.

ARCH SILHOUETTE/ LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

NPS

Eero Saarinen felt that an architectural idea must be as simple as possible to have meaning and impact. All its elements must contribute to the overall artistic expression. The central idea of the Gateway Arch is a graceful catenary curve, the shape a chain takes when suspended freely between two points.

Neither an obelisk nor a rectangular box nor a dome seemed right on this site or for this purpose. But here, at the edge of the Mississippi River, a great arch ***did*** *seem right.* —*Eero Saarinen, 1959*

PORTRAIT/ NPS
SIGNATURE/NPS

AMERICAN IDENTITY EXPRESSED

The Gateway Arch is a world-renowned masterpiece of modern architecture built on the banks of the Mississippi River in downtown St. Louis, Mo. Rising from a forested park, it is a part of the national historic site created in 1935 to memorialize the role of St. Louis in the westward expansion of the United States.

To create the memorial, 40 blocks of old buildings were leveled in the core of the downtown area. It was here that the French originally set up a fur trading post in 1764, and that steamboats jostled for space in one of the nation's busiest pre-Civil War ports.

In 1947 a competition challenged architects to desi memorial that would symbolize the dramatic story westward expansion. The judges chose Eero Saar Gateway Arch from among 172 entries. Saarinen's along with his other works—the TWA terminal at airport in New York City and Dulles airport out Washington D.C.—used engineering, materials, a technology to create iconic and daring designs.

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MAKING OF A MONUMENT

The structure of the Gateway Arch, built between 1963 and 1965, is a sandwich made of stainless steel on the outside, carbon steel on the inside, and concrete in the middle.

Nothing like this had ever been built or even attempted. How could workers be sure the legs would meet at the top? How could they keep it from tipping over? The plans called for exact measurements of the two freestanding legs as each piece was welded into place. Post-tensioning rods made of steel placed within the back side of each le the structure from tipping over until the final sectio stabilize the 630-foot structure. Workers struggled a high winds, biting cold, and searing heat, couple dizzying heights and uneven surfaces. On the final construction an excited audience watched as the settled the keystone into place *(see left)*. The tram created in just two weeks by elevator designer Dick annually takes one million people to the top.

THOSE WHO PASSED THIS WAY

Over 200 years ago the land to the west of St. Louis was a blank space on the map for most U.S. citizens. Yet by the 1890s most of that land had been explored and settled by three generations of Americans. They had largely displaced the original inhabitants and brought their own customs and cultures to the region.

ST. LOUIS St. Louis played a central role in this huge migration and cultural shift. Founded as a French fur trading post in 1764, St. Louis became a center of commerce along the Mississippi and Missouri rivers. For over 100 years river trade built, shaped, and transformed St. Louis into a bustling and multicultural metropolis.

EXPLORERS The period of westward expansion began in earnest with explorers who set out from the St. Louis area: Meriwether Lewis and William Clark on their Pacific Ocean expedition (1804–1806); Zebulon Pike on his southwest expedition (1806–1807); and Stephen Long's trips to survey western rivers and mountains (1819–1821).

TRAPPERS AND MOUNTAIN MEN In 1822 St. Louis politician and fur trader William H. Ashley advertised for 100 men to work as trappers in the Rocky Mountains. Those who answered Ashley's call became the first of the legendary mountain men.

Ashley devised the rendezvous system in which trappers, Indians, and traders met to exchange furs and merchandise. His innovations profited St. Louis and helped open the West to expansion.

TRAILS WEST From 1841 until the completion of the transcontinental railroad in 1869, thousands of wagon trains headed west on a four- to six-month journey. Many gathered supplies in St. Louis, taking steamboats to the trailheads near Independence, Mo. Over 300,000 settlers traveled overland, some seeking free land, others religious freedom, and others gold.

SOLDIERS IN THE WEST St. Louis was a major military depot throughout the 1800s, supplying western forts with munitions and subsistence as the army displaced Indian tribal groups, forcing them onto reservations. The c the scene of the negotiation of Indian treaties in which tribes ly ceded their lands to the gove

END OF AN ERA The story ward expansion was not a sin of manifest destiny but was co of multiple stories from thous different perspectives. Some stories of triumph, others of St. Louis played a significant majority of the events surrou this mass-migration, events c orated today by Jefferson Nat Expansion Memorial.

NBM/USGS

William Clark's *Ma the West*, 1805–18 first compiled duri Lewis and Clark ex it later hung in Cl Indian Council Ch in St. Louis. Fur tr explorers, and Ind amended the map visits to Clark, ma the most accurate of the American W its time.

ST. LOUIS

Settled near the c ence of the Mississ Missouri rivers, St became a center o

Exploring Jefferson National Expansion Memorial

PLANNING YOUR VISIT
Welcome to Jefferson National Expansion Memorial (JNEM). A typical visit includes riding the tram to the top of the Gateway Arch; viewing a film in one of two theaters; visiting the Historic Old Courthouse, where the Dred Scott case began in 1846; and enjoying the Museum of Westward Expansion. For details visit: www.nps.gov/jeff.

ST. LOUIS The Gateway Arch is in downtown St. Louis, Mo., in a metropolitan area of 2.5 million people. For information about attractions and services, visit the St. Louis Convention and Visitor's Commission at www.explorestlouis.com.

VISIT THE MUSEUM The Museum of Westward Expansion beneath the Arch charts the history of the American West from the Louisiana Purchase in 1803 to the closing of the frontier in the 1890s. You can see how American Indians and pioneers lived. Exhibits show artifacts used by farmers, buffalo hunters, miners, cowboys, and others who played a role in westward expansion. Watch for a stagecoach, a covered wagon, a bullboat, and a wheel used to steer a steamboat.

RIDING THE TRAM The highlight of most visits to JNEM is a ride to the top of the 630-foot Arch. The north-leg and south-leg trams—a unique capsule-transporter system—consist of barrel-shaped capsules joined together to form a train-like vehicle that runs on tracks inside the hollow legs of the Arch. Each capsule holds five passengers and maintains a level position throughout the four-minute ride to the top. Tickets are required.

HISTORIC OLD COURTHOUSE AND OLD CATHEDRAL Two historic buildings are within walking distance of the Arch. The *Historic Old Courthouse*, part of JNEM, was the site of a lawsuit that gained world-wide notoriety. In 1846 Dred Scott and his wife Harriet sued for and were granted their freedom. Later the U.S. Supreme Court declared that slaves were property and had no right to sue, a decision that hastened the Civil War. It offers exhibits and a museum store. The 1834 Old Cathedral, still an active Catholic parish, is open for visitation and has a small museum.

ENTRANCE FEES HELP PROGRAMS
Like many national parks, JNEM collects fees that support public programs and preservation projects. Fees are paid at the ticket counter on the east side of the Gateway Arch Visitor Center. Thank you for your support.

FOR YOUR SAFETY The usual cautions that apply in urban areas are important during a visit to JNEM. Lock all valuables out of sight or take them with you. Be careful crossing streets and on steps and ramps; *ask the park about accessible routes*. Keep your children with you at all times. Report suspicious activity to a park ranger. Visitors entering the Gateway Arch Visitor Center are subject to search and examination of all carry-in items. **Emergencies: Call 911.**

MORE INFORMATION
Jefferson National Expansion Memorial
11 North 4th Street
St. Louis, MO 63102
314-655-1700
www.nps.gov/jeff

Jefferson National Expansion Memorial is one of over 390 parks in the National Park System. To learn more about national parks visit www.nps.gov.

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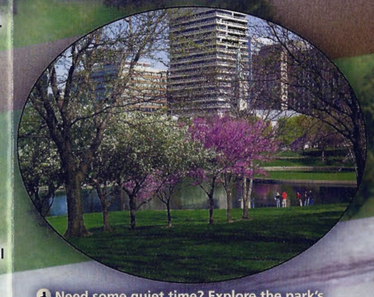
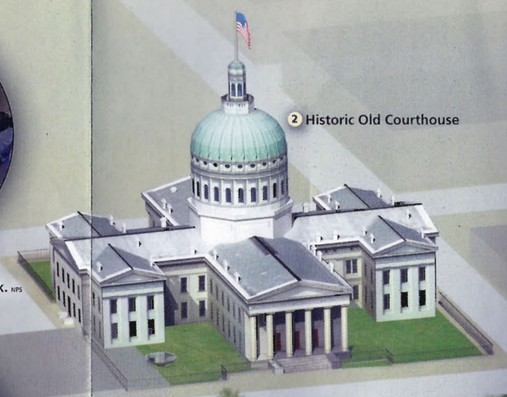
1 You can see for miles from the observation deck. NPS

2 Take a tour and see exhibits at the Historic Old Courthouse. ©GATEWAY ARCH RIVERFRONT

3 Look in the museum for a full-size tipi and lifelike animal displays. ©GATEWAY ARCH RIVERFRONT



4 Need some quiet time? Explore the park's grounds. NPS



5 The tram cars stay upright while moving, like seats on a Ferris wheel. ©GATEWAY ARCH RIVERFRONT