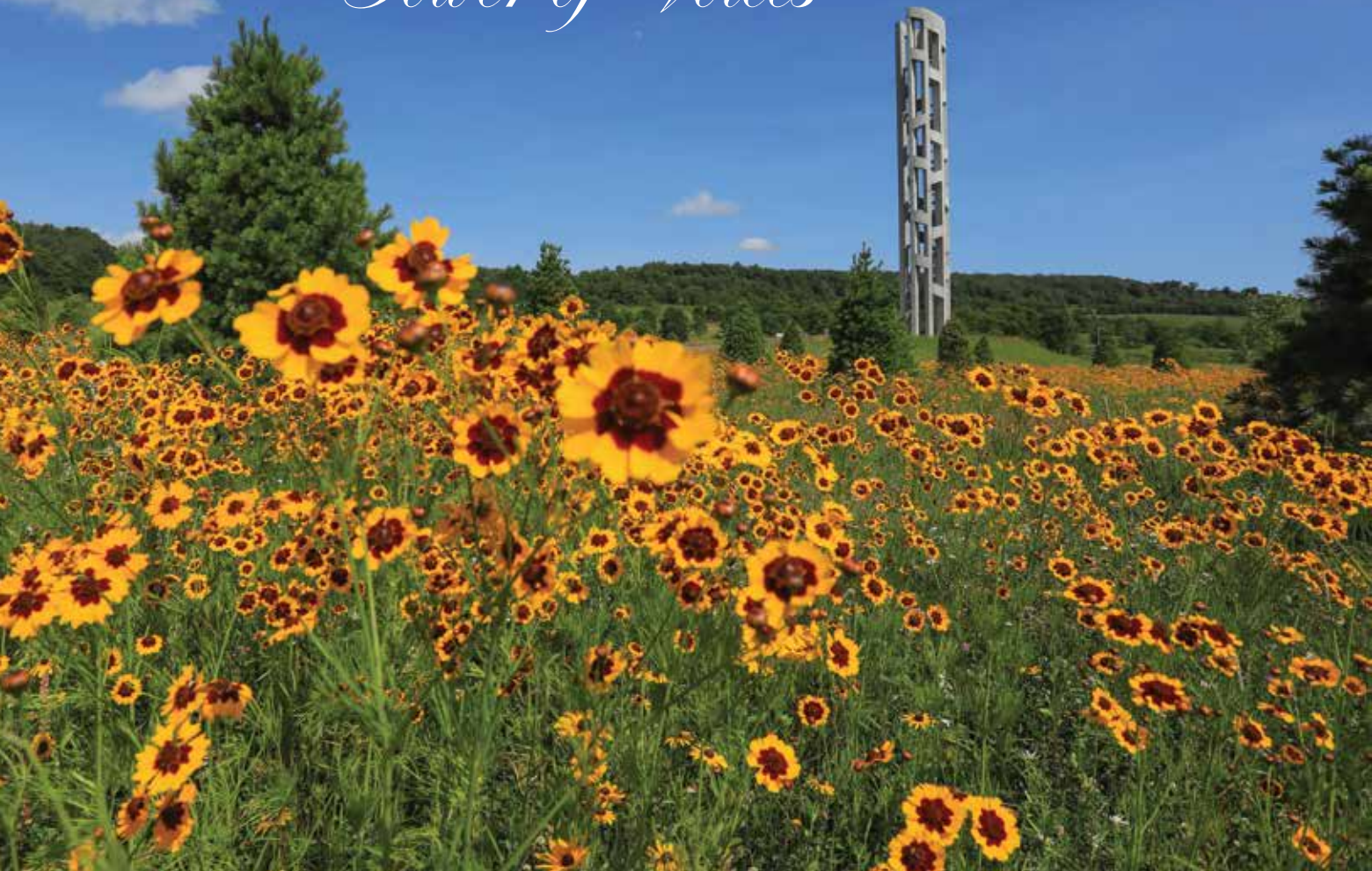


Flight 93 National Memorial

Tower of Voices



A living memorial to honor the passengers and crew members aboard Flight 93

Written by: **Shelby Calhoun**

Photos provided by National Park Service

On September 24, 2002, President Bush signed into law the Flight 93 National Memorial Act. The Act created a new national park unit to commemorate the passengers and crew members of Flight 93 who, on September 11, 2001, courageously gave their lives thereby thwarting a planned attack on our nation's capital. The memorial is located near Shanksville, Pennsylvania, where Flight 93 crashed with the loss of its 40 passengers and crew members.

Standing sentinel at Flight 93 National Memorial is a 93-foot concrete tower which will hold 40 aluminum wind chimes in honor of the 40 on Flight 93. Known as the

"Tower of Voices" and built on a mound surrounded by white pine trees at the entrance to the 2,200-acre national park, the tower is meant to set the tone for the memorial experience of the visitors. Each chime, ranging from five to ten feet in length, is tuned to 40 different pitches, symbolic of each person's unique voice.

Paul Murdoch, architect of Flight 93 National Memorial, said the tower is basically a 93-foot-tall musical instrument. "We wanted to do something in sound as part of the memorial because the last memory of many of the passengers and crew members was through their voices on the phone

calls they made from the plane,” said Mr. Murdoch. “We also wanted to be using the natural forces of this site to create sounds that would change all the time. The chimes are tuned to certain notes, but the sounds will change as the wind activates them.

“The tower is meant to be heroic in stature, while the sounds are meant to be personal and intimate,” he said. “So, on the one hand, there is the heroic action of these people working together. On the other hand, there were 40 different people involved, which are represented by the 40 chimes.”

Field-testing on the eight prototype wind chimes that were installed at the Tower of Voices last September remains ongoing. “Continued development and refinement of the chime assembly design is progressing with the next phase of full-scale mock-up testing. The scale, complexity and uniqueness of the chime system requires a back-and-forth and open-ended process of design to ensure that all of the performance requirements are met before installing the forty chimes in the Tower of Voices,” said Paul Murdoch. The ongoing tests and commitment to ensuring the success of the wind chimes has extended the timetable for completion of this world class memorial. “While the timeline is longer than anticipated, we are committed to providing a chime system that appropriately honors each of the passengers and crew members and will stand the test of time,” said Flight 93 National Memorial Superintendent Stephen Clark.

Other components of the National Memorial include a concrete and glass visitor center which serves as the educational hub of the memorial, featuring traditional and interactive exhibits, photos and stories from eye-witnesses. The visitor center opened on September 10, 2015, and is situated on a hill overlooking the crash site along with the white marble Wall of Names. An observation platform at the visitor center and the white marble wall are both aligned beneath the flight path of Flight 93.

Flight 93 National Memorial is open seven days a week from sunrise to sunset.

The Visitor Center is open 9:00 am – 5:00 pm.

For more information see www.nps.gov/flni or phone (814) 893-6322.



PHOTO BY LANCE BELL

Top: A beautiful sunset during construction of the Tower of Voices.

Middle: Looking inside the Tower of Voices where the 40 wind chimes will be installed. The chimes are constructed of polished aluminum tubes ranging 8-16 inches in diameter and approximately five to ten feet in length.

Bottom: Inside the Visitor Center where the story of 9/11/2001 unfolds via multimedia interactive displays.