

DTTP Helps Relaunch Corps of Discovery

MARTINSBURG, WV – When Meriwether Lewis visited Harpers Ferry, VA, in April 1803 to buy arms and iron works for his upcoming expedition, few people took notice of the bookish-looking man and his purchases, which included 15 gun worms, 40 fish gigs and a collapsible iron boat. On the 200th anniversary of his visit, however, hundreds of people – mostly students – followed his every move. With the aid of the National Guard Bureau's Distributive Training Technology Project (DTTP), many of these students watched remotely from cities across the enormous expanse of territory that Lewis helped open up.

Over the next three years, as part of the National Bicentennial Commemoration of the original Corps of Discovery expedition, the Discovery Expedition of St. Charles, MO, will trace Meriwether Lewis and William Clark's journey west across the United States. The project will begin in Elizabeth, PA, in August 2003 and will end in Great Falls, MT, in 2006. The Discovery Expedition promotes education and the study of American history through discussions and living-history demonstrations, and the group will make frequent stops at area schools along the way.

To support the project's kickoff on April 16, DTTP "armed" the Discovery expedition with its multimedia classroom and resources in Martinsburg, WV. Using DTTP, approximately 130 students from Lanesville, IN, Clayton, MO, Ilwaco, WA, and Fairfield, MT, met face to face with experts from the Harpers Ferry National Historical Park, the Lewis and Clark Honor Guard of Montana, and representatives from the National Park Service, who discussed the Park Service's Lewis and Clark Bicentennial Traveling Exhibit called "Corps of Discovery II: 200 Years to the Future."

Major Stephan Picard, Chief, DTTP Policy & Liaison, noted parallels between DTTP and the Corps of Discovery. "Lewis and Clark set out into virtually unknown territory and opened up a whole new world," he said, "changing the way Americans see themselves and their country. DTTP, on the other hand, has set out into the realm of distance learning to help transform the way our citizens and soldiers meet their training and education needs. The April 16 video-conference is, in a small way, a sign that we're succeeding." Picard added that NGB's partnership with the Discovery Expedition furthers the National Guard's educational initiative. "We are very pleased to support the Discovery Expedition, and look forward to the continued success of the program."

More information about the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial Expedition, can be found at the project's website, <http://lewisandclark.net>. Information about DTTP can be found at <http://www.dttp.ngb.army.mil> or, by e-mail, at dttp@busops.ngbcio.ngb.army.mil.

