**FRIENDS OF MONMOUTH BATTLEFIELD**

**NEWSLETTER NOVEMBER 2017**

**ANNUAL MEETING AND ELECTIONS**

**TO BE HELD DECEMBER 6**

Our annual meeting and elections, as required by our by-laws, will be held on Wednesday, December 6, 2017 at the Monmouth County Library Headquarters, located at 125 Symmes Drive in Manalapan (phone 732-431-7220).

The meeting will begin at 7:00 PM. We will summarize activities for the year and will preview events for next year. Ballots for trustees and officers, and the annual plan and the budget will be received in person if not mailed in previously. They will then be counted and the results tallied and announced.

Ballots and election information are being mailed separately to paid up members.

The nominating committee presented its slate of officers at the October 5 general meeting. The annual plan for 2018 and annual budget for 2018 were discussed and approved at the Board of Trustees meeting held on October 11.

David Martin is nominated to serve a fourth term as President. George Dawson is nominated to continue as Vice President. Kathy Doherty is nominated to continue as Treasurer and Fran Raleigh as Secretary. Rich Bellamy’s term as trustee is expiring and he is nominated to stand for another term. Walter Kowalksy’s term is also expiring but he is opting to retire as trustee. We thank him sincerely for his long years of service. John Resto of South Plainfield is being nominated to an open slot on the board of trustees.

A list of current officers and trustees is listed later in this newsletter, and also on our website.

**CRAIG HOUSE TO CLOSE FOR THE SEASON DECEMBER 3 ANOTHER GRANT SOUGHT FOR MORE WINDOW WORK**

The historic Craig House, which is interpreted by members of the Friends, has been open Sundays from 1-4 PM since last April. Due to cold weather and lowered visitation over the winter, it will close for the season on December 3. It will reopen again in April 2018.

Our sincere thanks are owed to Kathy and Eric Doherty for serving as docents at the Craig House. Without their help, the building could not be opened to visitors on a regular basis, since the Park does not have sufficient staff to do so. Visitation averages 10-15 guests per date.

We are in the process of applying for another grant from the Monmouth County Historical Commission. This request is for aid in restoring two windows on the north side of the second floor of Craig House. Three years ago, we received a grant to replace three windows, and two years ago, we received a grant to replace the two windows in the milk room. Last year we received help to replace two windows on the ground floor of the north side of the house. The new project will give us new windows on the entire north side of the house. We are most grateful to the Commission for their help.

**FOMB HAS INFORMATION TABLE  
 AT MONMOUTH COUNTY ARCHIVES DAY**

The Friends were well represented at Monmouth County Archives Day, which was held on Saturday, October 14, at the main branch of the Monmouth County Library on Symmes Drives in Manalapan. Every year 60 or more history groups from Monmouth County and around the state have display and information tables at the all-day event.

Thanks go to Trustees Andy Beagle and George Dawson for setting up and manning our information table.

**SCHEDULE OF WINTER ACTIVITIES (2017-2018)**

Dec. 3, 2017 (Sun) Walking tour of the battlefield. Meet at Visitor Center at 1:30 PM

Dec. 3, 2017 (Sun) Craig House open 1-4 PM, then closes for the season.

Dec. 6, 2017 (Wed) Annual business meeting. Meeting held at 7 PM at the main branch of the Monmouth County Library, Symmes Drive in

Manalapan

Dec. 10, 2017 (Sun) Program on the 28th NJ at the battle of Fredericksburg on

December 13, 1862 (the regiment trained at Camp

Vredenburg in 1862, inside the present State Park). Held at 2 PM in the Visitor Center Auditorium,

Jan. 1, 2018 (Mon) “First Day Hike.” Visit the ground on which Molly Pitcher fought. Meet at Visitor Center at 11 AM, then drive to the

northern part of the Park for a guided walking tour (about two hours).

Jan. 7, 2018 (Sun) Walking tour of battlefield. Meet at Visitor Center at 1:30 PM (weather permitting).

Jan. 11, 2018 (Thurs) Program by Dr. David Martin “They Were Also Here: Aaron

Burr and Alexander Hamilton at the Battle of Monmouth.”

7 PM at the main branch of Monmouth County Library,

Symmes Drive in Manalapan. (snow date Jan 25).

Feb. 5, 2018 (Sun) Walking tour of the battlefield. Meet at Visitor Center at 1:30 PM.

Feb 11, 2018 (Sun) Program on “George Washington at Monmouth.” Held at 2 PM in the Visitor Center Auditorium.

Feb. 18, 2018 (Sun) Program on “Black and Native American Troops at the Battle of Monmouth.” Held at 2 PM in the Visitor Center Auditorium.

March 4, 2018 (Sun) Walking tour of the battlefield. Meet at Visitor Center at 1:30 PM.

March 18, 2018 (Sun) Program on “Molly Pitcher at Monmouth.” Held at 2 PM

in the Visitor Center Auditorium .

*Gift Shop is open Sundays from 1 - 4 PM at the Visitor Center.*

*Craig House is closed for the season, December 3, 2017 until April 2018*

**HISTORY TALKS GIVEN IN SEPTEMBER**

**CEREMONIES HELD AT MAPLEWOOD CEMETERY**

**GOVERNOR JOEL PARKER’S GRAVE FOUND IN DISARRAY**

In September FOMB President David Martin gave two historical talks in the Visitor Center Auditorium. On September 10, he spoke to a lively and interested audience on the role of New Jersey’s troops in the battle, both the militia and the regular Continental brigade (Maxwell’s command). The New Jersey militia was engaged in the fighting on the field only in the opening stage of the battle, from around 8 to 9 AM. Maxwell’s brigade of regulars took part in Lee’s advance to Monmouth Court House in the morning but withdrew before being engaged. During Lee’s retrograde movement, Maxwell was ordered to hold the northern extension of the Hedgerow line at around 1 PM, but only one of his regiments (the 1st New Jersey) took position there, and it held for only a few minutes before Maxwell found it necessary to fall back to Perrine Hill. Maxwell’s 1st and 2nd Regiments helped hold the reserve line behind Perrine Hill later in the battle. More research needs to be done on what Maxwell’s 3rd and 4th New Jersey regiments were doing during the latter part of the battle.

On September 17, Dr. Martin gave a talk on the history of Camp Vredenburg and the battles of the 14th New Jersey Infantry, one of the regiments that trained there in 1862. The camp was named after local judge Peter Vredenburg, Sr. and is now within the confines of the battlefield state park. He focused on the battle of Opequon (3rd Winchester), where the unit’s commander, Major Peter Vredenburg, Jr., was killed in action on September 19, 1864.

After this presentation, Dr. Martin and Victor Piderman from the Park staff gave a brief memorial service in honor of Major Vredenburg at his grave in Maplewood Cemetery (located on West Main Street in Freehold Township). Afterwards the group went to pay their respects at the grave of Joel Parker (Governor of New Jersey from 1863-1866) in the same cemetery. They were dismayed to find the gravesite totally overgrown with vines and brush. We have put in a request to the cemetery to clean up Governor Parker’s grave, which they have promised to do. We will keep you updated.

**FOMB OFFICERS FOR 2017** **(terms expire December 6, 2017)**

President Dr. David Martin

Vice President George Dawson

Secretary Fran Raleigh

Treasurer Kathy Doherty

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS** (end of term in parentheses)

Andrew Beagle (2018) South Plainfield, NJ

Richard Bellamy (2017) Spotswood, NJ

Michael Cervini (2018) Toms River, NJ

George Dawson (2019) New Brunswick, NJ

Eric Doherty (2019) Old Bridge, NJ

Kathy Doherty (2019) Old Bridge, NJ

Walter Kowalsky (2017) Freehold, NJ

Dr. David Martin (2018) East Windsor, NJ

Marilyn Miller (2018) Toms River, NJ

Fran Raleigh (2019) Colts Neck, NJ

Peter Wagner (2018) Englishtown, NJ

**2018 Membership Application**

The Revolution in New Jersey had profound meaning. To help keep the past alive, we ask for your commitment in Protecting, Preserving and Historically Interpreting Monmouth Battlefield State Park, a Registered National Historic landmark, and the sites associated with the Monmouth Campaign of 1778.

**Name \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Address \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**City \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**State \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

***CHECK ONE***

***New membership Renewal***

**CIRCLE LEVEL OF MEMBERSHIP**

**Individual $20 Family $30**

**Senior Individual $5 Senior Family $10**

**Patron $100 Lifetime $250**

***The Friends rely on membership and donations for much of our general operating budget. If you would like to make a donation above the membership dues, we would deeply appreciate your thoughtfulness. The Friends is a 501(c)(3) not-for profit organization and your donation is fully tax-deductible. Thank you.***

**Donation included in the amount of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**FRIENDS OF MONMOUTH BATTLEFIELD, INC.**

**PO Box 122, Tennent NJ 07763**

November 2017

Dear Friend of Monmouth Battlefield,

I am writing to ask for your support for the Friends and our objectives. I sincerely hope that you will be able to attend our meetings and programs this year as we continue our programs to help preserve and develop Monmouth Battlefield State Park and to interpret the battle and events associated with it. Please consider renewing your membership or joining the Friends by returning the enclosed membership application to us at the address given above.

This is an exciting year because of the continued expansion of all our programming. We are giving additional walks and talks on the battlefield, and we will be helping the Park erect additional wayside historical markers on the battlefield. Our biggest ongoing project is the completion of the James T. Raleigh Memorial Library and Research Center, which we hope we finally will be able to start working on after a two-year delay waiting for building upgrades. Our new and expanded gift shop offers the best selection of books and pamphlets on the battle that are available anywhere (visit our website if you want to order items by mail).

We are continuing our popular free guided tours on the first Sunday of every month. We are also available to give group tours at other times by arrangement. In addition, we are helping to man and interpret the historic Craig House at the battlefield, every Sunday from 1-4 PM from the beginning of April to the beginning of December.

We cosponsored, along with the State Park, the annual reenactment of the Battle of Monmouth in June, and also sponsored commemorative programing the weekend after the reenactment. We again received a matching grant from the Monmouth County Historical Commission to undertake much needed window replacements at the historic Craig House. More grants for similar projects are in the works.

If you have questions or want information, please contact President Dr. David Martin at 609-529-5356 ([dmartin@peddie.org](mailto:dmartin@peddie.org)). Our excellent and informative website can be viewed at [www.friendsofmonmouth.org](http://www.friendsofmonmouth.org)

Sincerely,

Dr. David Martin, President

*Additional accomplishments for the past year include:*

*Sponsorship of programs and tours on the actual anniversary of the battle in June 2017*

*Sponsorship of programs on “The Revolutionary War in Monmouth County” in June and July*

*Cosponsorship of historical programming in New Brunswick on July 4*

*Maintenance of a new and expanded gift shop at the Visitor Center*

*Regular membership meetings on historical topics related to the Battle and Park*

*Outreach to schools, community groups and state agencies*

*Regular free monthly tours of the battlefield held the first Sunday of every month*

*Development of additional walking and driving tours of the Battle of Monmouth*

*Staffing of the Craig House every Sunday from1-4 PM from April to December*

*Working closely with Park staff to help man and interpret the new Visitor Center*

*Maintenance of a large and current website (friendsofmonmouth.org)*

**FRIENDS OF MONMOUTH BATTLEFIELD, INC.**

**PO Box 122, Tennent NJ 0776**

**PROGRAM GIVEN ON BRITISH COMMANDERS AND**

**LEADERSHIP ON OCTOBER 5**

At the October 5 general meeting, FOMB President David Martin gave a program on the role played by British commanders at the battle. The most famous British officer at the battle, even more well known than British army commander Sir Henry Clinton, was Lord Charles Cornwallis. Cornwallis was the army’s second-in-command, but he is much better known for his campaigns in the South later in the war and for his surrender at Yorktown in 1781, which sealed the American victory in the war. Though he was on the field for the entire battle of Monmouth, Cornwallis actually did little of note in the battle, largely because General Clinton was at his side all day, leading the army and looking over his shoulder.

Another high-ranking British officer, Baron Wilhelm von Knyphausen, commander of the German troops, was not on the field because he marched out of Monmouth Court House before dawn on the day of the battle. The most active British officers on the field were Generals Henry Erskine and General Charles “No Flint” Grey, who fought on the northern part of the field, and Lieutenant Colonel John Simcoe, commander of the Queen’s American Rangers, who was wounded during the opening stages of the battle.

The talk was held at the main branch of the Monmouth County Library and had around thirty people in attendance. Many thanks to the library staff for all the advertising and for setting up the large meeting room. Additional joint programming is planned for the future.

**POPULAR WALKING TOUR PROGRAM CONTINUES**

Our program of walking tours continues to be successful. Tours are regularly held on the first Sunday of each month, and occasionally on other Sundays.

A small but enthusiastic group visited the Point of Woods area and approaches to the Hedgerow line on September 3. On October 1 a large group toured the Hedgerow line and Parsonage area, dodging all the fences set up to facilitate apple picking in the Park’s orchards.

The next regularly scheduled walking tour will be conducted on December 3 and January 7. They meet at 1:30 PM at the Visitor Center and no reservations are required. In case of bad weather, a driving tour of the park, or historical lecture in the new Visitor Center auditorium, will be substituted.

**SPECIAL WALKING TOUR TO NEW MOLLY PITCHER**

**SITE TO BE HELD ON JANUARY 1**

This year the Friends will once again be participating in the “America’s State Parks First Day Hikes" program sponsored by the state’s Division of Parks & Forestry. On Monday, January 1, a special tour will be offered by David Martin to Perrine Hill to view the main American position there and visit sites associated with Molly Pitcher. Those interested in the tour should meet at the Visitor Center at 11 AM. We will then drive to the northern part of the park for the tour. This tour, which has averaged about

50 participants each year, will be over between 12:30 and 1 PM. If the weather is questionable, call the park office for information at 732-462-9616

**MORE ON GENERAL WASHINGTON’S**

**“HORSE OF A DIFFERENT COLOR” AT MONMOUTH**

In the last newsletter, we wrote about General Washington’s favorite horses during the war, one named Blueskin and a sorrel with a white face named Nelson. We are not sure which if either he rode at Monmouth. In fact, according to historian William S. Stryker, Washington on the morning of the battle was riding a white horse that had been given to him three days earlier by New Jersey Governor William Livingston. This horse, whose name is not preserved, collapsed at some point during the battle (Stryker, *The Battle of Monmouth,* page 81).

There is additional evidence that Washington was riding a white horse during the first part of the battle. James Jordan, a twenty-nine year old private in the 2nd New Jersey regiment of Maxwell’s brigade, recalled later, “After we had passed the Court House a little we were met by Gen. Washington who came up with the main army riding a white horse. This petitioner was within a yard of him and heard him address Gen. Lee by asking him, What is this you have been about today?”

This statement places Washington on a white horse at the time of his confrontation with General Lee near Wemrock Road at about 1 PM. We still do not know when in the battle the white horse collapsed, but it had to have been later in the afternoon.

This evidence makes it clear that Emanuel Leutze is not accurate in depicting Washington astride a brown horse in his painting “Washington Rallying the Troops at Monmouth, a version of which is on display at the Monmouth County Historical Association on Court Street in Freehold. Nor can the horse depicted by Leutze be Washington’s favorite steed Nelson, since Nelson is known to have had a white face and white legs, and Leutze’s horse is totally brown.

The facts of the matter are that we do not know the name of the white horse that Washington was riding, nor do we know when it collapsed (though this was after 1 PM). In addition, we do not know what horse Washington rode for the rest of the battle after the white animal went down.

**RECORD MEMBERSHIP REACHED IN 2017**

**2018 MEMBERSHIP DRIVE OPENS (forms enclosed)**

**LONGTIME MEMBER LYDIA WIKOFF PASSES**

This year we reached another record membership, with 127 memberships, breaking last year’s record of 123. We cannot do all that we do without the support of our membership. Thanks!

We are very sorry to report that longtime FOMB member and supporter Lydia S. Wikoff passed away on Saturday, June 3, 2017 at the age of 93. She was a lifelong resident of Manalapan Township and served as Manalapan historian for some 35 years, only giving up the position five years ago at age 88. Lydia and her late husband Charles were founding members of our sister organization, the Battleground Historical Society in Englishtown. She collected vast amounts of local history and was a tireless advocate for preserving local historical buildings.

(Information drawn from the “Matchaponix Journal,” the newsletter of Battleground Historical Society. For more information or to get a membership application, contact Battleground Historical Society, PO Box 61, Tennent, NJ 07763, or see their website at [www.thevillage](http://www.thevillage) inn.org. Their museum at the historic Village Inn in Englishtown is open from 1-3 PM on the third Sunday of every month.)

**THE FATE OF LT. COL. MONCKTON**

Lieutenant Colonel Henry Monckton, commander of the 2nd Battalion of Grenadiers, was the highest-ranking British officer killed in the battle of Monmouth. Unfortunately, the time and place of his death are not known for sure, and additional controversies attend his death.

Monckton and his men participated in the successful British attack on the hedgerow line shortly after 1 PM. He was then ordered by General Henry Clinton, the British army commander, to press the withdrawing Americans. Clinton was in hope that he could win a decisive victory by pursuing the retreating enemy closely and not allowing them to reform.

Monckton led his men westward along the course of present Route 522 towards the causeway over the West Morass. At some point in the attack he fell a casualty, but we do not know exactly where. One of his men, Lieutenant William Hale, says that “Col. Monckton was shot through the heart at the first charge.” Other sources say that he was killed before reaching the causeway, presumably by grapeshot from Oswald’s American cannons, while still others (Lender and Stone, *Fatal Sunday*, page 312), place his fall to the west of the causeway, caused by American artillery on Perrine Hill. Still other sources suggest that he was shot later in the day during the fighting near the Parsonage at around 5 PM (Stryker, *The Battle of Monmouth*, pages 216-217).

Best evidence now is that Monckton was not killed during the afternoon fight at the parsonage, since his unit was not engaged in that part of the battle. The actual spot he was shot along Route 522 is still under discussion, as already mentioned,

We are also not sure if he was killed on the spot or mortally wounded. Lieutenant William Hale, as cited, says that he was killed on the spot. However, a French officer named chevalier de Pontgibaud says that he was badly wounded and was taken to the hospital at Tennent Church, where he died after suffering for twenty-four hours. The French officer’s account seems to be the more reliable.

Wherever and however he died, Lt. Col. Monckton was buried with military honors just west of Tennent Church, and remains there today. A few years after the battle a marker was put up by William R. Wilson with the words, “Hic Jacet Col. Monckton, killed 28 June 1778.” (Hic Jacet is Latin for, “Here lies”). There is a picture of this marker in Benson Lossing’s *Pictorial History of the American Revolution*, Vol. 2 page 157

This marker deteriorated over the years, and in 1888 a new stone marker was erected by Samuel Fryer, who owned a cemetery monument business in nearby Hightstown. Fryer erected the stone in memory of his father, as noted on the stone’s inscription: “Lt. Col. Henry Monckton who on the plain of Monmouth June 28, 1778 sealed with his life his duty and devotion to his king and country. This memorial erected by Samuel Fryer whose father a subject of Great Britain sleeps in an unknown grave.”

This stone marker is still there and is worth a visit. (Samuel Fryer’s son attended West Point and rose to the rank fo Brigadier General. He won the Medal of Honor for bravery at the battle of Vera Cruz, Mexico, in 1914, and is buried at West Point. See John Orr, *Reflections from the Shrine,* pages 248-251.)

Stryker claims that there was quite a fight over Monckton’s body until Continental troops got possession of it. Captain Hale, who was at the battle, says he sent out a detachment later to recover it but they could not find it, presumably because the Americans had already carried it off. Whatever the case, the Colonel ended up at Tennent Church, where he was buried, as noted.

**THE SAGA OF COL. MONCKTON’S**

**SWORD AND FLAG**

Wherever Lt. Col. Monckton was shot and whenever and whenever he died, his

sword quickly came into the possession of Captain William Wilson of the 1st Pennsylvania. Captain Wilson at once presented it to General Anthony Wayne to present it to General Lafayette. Lafayette carried the sword through the French Revolution and then brought it back to America when he came on his triumphal tour in 1824. Lafayette then gave the sword Captain Wilson’s son (the Captain had died in 1813), Abraham Scott Wilson. The sword then passed down through the Wilson family until a great-granddaughter, Mrs. Howard F. Brinton, gave it to the Monmouth County Historical Society in 1954.

Interestingly, the sword does not appear to be of British manufacture. The hilt is made of silver rather than brass. The hallmarks are worn and not readable, and the maker’s mark is not otherwise known. Nor is Colonel Monckton’s name engraved on the sword or its scabbard. Best current opinion is that it was made in America, though we do not know when or where, or how Colonel Monckton came to have it.

Regardless of when and where Colonel Monckton’s sword was made, it has a most interesting history. It is still in the collection of the Monmouth County Historical Association, though it is not currently on display.

The same Captain Wilson who recovered Colonel Monckton’s sword also came into possession of a flag that was for a long time thought to belong to the Colonel. The flag is made of yellow silk and is large, about five feet square (actually 57 by 64 inches). In the upper left corner is the British Union canton. According to family tradition, the flag was captured by Captain Wilson at Monmouth and was supposedly the personal flag of Colonel Monckton. It was in the possession of Captain Wilson’s family until 1943, when it was presented to the Monmouth County Historical Association by the Captain’s great-great-granddaughter, Mrs. Marguerite Potter Bixler.

Recent research does not support this flag being British. A British flag would have had unit symbols or designation on it, and the flag’s design, especially the inset canton, was not correct for a British flag. Most critically, the 2nd Grenadiers was a temporary unit and so would not have carried unit colors. The flag most likely is an early war (pre 1776) battalion color of Captain Wilson’s regiment, the 1st Pennsylvania, probably home made.

The flag is still owned by MCHA and has the honor of being displayed at the brand new Museum of the American Revolution in Philadelphia.

**SEARCH FOR NEW PARK SUP’T STILL UNDER WAY**

The search for a new Superintendent at Monmouth Battlefield State Park is still ongoing. As reported previously, Acting Park Superintendent Robert Auermuller was reassigned this spring after being at the Park for about a year. The effort to appoint a new full time Superintendent has been going on for a while without success. We will keep you posted in this important process.

**OUR NEXT BATTLE OF MONMOUTH REENACTMENT**

**WILL BE JUNE 16-17, 2018**

**LEUTZE’S “WASHINGTON AT MONMOUTH” PAINTING**

Emanuel Leutze was born in Germany in 1816 but was raised in America. He died in 1868 and is buried in Washington D.C. Leutze painted “Washington Rallying the Troops at Monmouth” in 1853, two years after he painted his more famous piece, “Washington Crossing the Delaware.” The original Monmouth painting was donated to the University of California in 1882, where it was displayed for a number of years until it was put in storage and forgotten about.

In 1857 Leutze made a one-third size version of “Washington at Monmouth”, which came into the possession of the Monmouth County Historical Association, where it can be seen today. For many years the MCHA painting was thought to be the original version instead of an artist’s copy, until the original painting was “rediscovered” in California in the 1960s.

The following is drawn from [www.americanrevolution.org/leutze](http://www.americanrevolution.org/leutze)

“*Washington at Monmouth” is a stark counterpoint to the almost pensive figure of the great General in “Washington Crossing the Delaware.” The former work is Leutze working in the full-blown drama of the 18th century Romantic School – Washington astride a charging courser which has its nostrils flared, flashing saber aloft, from head to toe the larger than life hero. The instant that Leutze dramatized on this canvas was in legend the one time in Washington’s life when he was angry enough to lose his temper and use foul language in public.*

*“Washington at Monmouth,” like “Washington Crossing the Delaware”, is a work which can be seen again and again without noticing everything. Leutze took great pains to be meticulously accurate with regard to uniforms, weapons, facial types of the soldiers, and portraits of the leading figures. The composition is carefully balanced, but packed with action. In the center, Washington has sunlight shining on his wrathful face, waving his sword as he rallies the troops of Lee’s command. Hamilton and a bareheaded Lafayette have ridden up with him and are reining in their horses. The figure of Lee is shrinking back in his saddle, his crestfallen face in shadow. In the foreground, exhausted riflemen and a thirsty dog scoop water from a spring; farther back, on the left, the soldiers raise a cheer for their Commander in Chief, while some of them have already turned to fire on the British. On the hilltop, behind the figure of Washington, American artillery gallops into position to stem the British attack, and at far right them men of Washington’s command approach the scene to enter the battle.*

*“Washington at Monmouth,” while it makes some historical errors (the General’s horse, for instance, was actually white), is true in spirit to the verifiable records of the battle of Monmouth. Beyond that, it movingly captures a moment in time when George Washington was exercising his truly heroic qualities in the American cause, and we are content to echo Hamilton’s comment on the occasion itself: “I never saw the General to so much advantage.”*

The Wikipedia article on Leutze notes that his works “are known less for their artistic quality than for their patriotic emotionalism.” His more famous painting “Washington Crossing the Delaware” is also known for some historical inaccuracies (especially the 13 star flag). The version of this painting that was for a long time displayed at the visitor center at Washington Crossing (PA) State Park was returned to its owner ten or so years ago and has been replaced by a digitally mastered duplicate.

**NEW MUSEUM OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION  
IN PHILADELPHIA GOOD BUT EXPENSIVE;**

**BATTLE OF MONMOUTH IS SLIGHTED**

Your Editor had the pleasure of visiting the new Museum of the American Revolution in Philadelphia twice last month. The museum is superbly put together and well worth the visit. In fact, its 20+ rooms are almost overwhelming. I got worn out both visits, even staying only two hours each time. The museum covers the entire scope of the war, including naval and Indian affairs. It has a large gift shop and a small café.

The down side is that it scarcely mentions Monmouth, and does not mention Molly Pitcher at all. The one mention of Monmouth is a few sentences at the end of one panel, and here there is a major historical inaccuracy, citing General William Howe as British commander at Monmouth when General Henry Clinton took over the British army the month before the battle. Ouch!!!

Watch for the life size manikin of Joseph Plumb Martin as the typical Revolutionary soldier. He was at Monmouth, though of course this is not mentioned.

The “wall of faces” – antique photographs of aged Revolutionary War veterans from the early 1800s –is as fascinating as advertised.

The tour concludes with a movie touting the museum’s prize possession, General Washington’s tent that he used at Valley Forge. The presentation, though, is almost idolatrous; when the movie ends, the screen lifts and lights focus on the actual tent on stage. I think our movie at the Monmouth Battlefield State Park Visitor Center is more effective, giving the history of the battle and then lifting the screen to view the actual battlefield.

The museum is not cheap; general admission is $19. It looks to me like the preregistration that is pushed on their website is not really necessary. The museum is located at 3rd and Chestnut Streets (101 South 3rd Street, Philadelphia, PA 19016), easy walking distance from Independence Hall. There are no parking garages nearby; recommendation is to park under Independence Mall. Hours are 10 AM to 5 PM every day except major holidays. It just opened this spring.

**BIRD WALK SCHEDULED FOR MAY 5**

This spring we are once again scheduling a bird walk on the battlefield. Spring is a great time to watch native and migratory birds. The walk will be led by avid ornithologists George and Barbara Dawson, and will take place at 8 AM on Saturday, May 5, 2018. The walk will meet outside the Visitor Center (which does not open until 9 AM), and will take about an hour and a half.

Most FOMB members are probably not aware that DEP (the Department of Environmental Protection) has published a free birds brochure that is available at the Park. It lists over 100 different kinds of birds that can be found at the Park, along with their relative abundance in each season of the year (spring, summer, fall and winter). Spring is the best season for bird watching, which is why we offer the bird walk in early May.

**VALLEY FORGE IS BEAUTIFUL IN THE FALL**

Your Editor also had the opportunity to visit Valley Forge on a crisp October afternoon. The site is magnificent and well worth the trip in any season (though I must admit I have not been there during winter time to get a feel for how General Washington’s troops endured the winter). Admission is free, and the new Park movie is definitely worth seeing. The only disappointment was that I was expecting more of their museum (apparently some of the items, in particular Washington’s tent, were moved to the new museum of the American Revolution in downtown Philadelphia).

The real star of the Park is the land itself, with a fair number of monuments, markers and recreated soldier huts. Here are a few takeaways from someone who has been there more than once.

The Park was created as Pennsylvania’s first state park in 1893. It became a National Park in 1976.

Valley Forge National Park has 3500 acres, and 26 miles of trails. The primary trail around the encampment area is named the Joseph Plum Martin Trail (about 9 miles long). (Monmouth Battlefield State Park is just under 2000 acres).

The movie, maps and brochure make it clearer how the encampment was set up with an outer and inner line of defense. Maxwell’s New Jersey Brigade was posted on the inner line. The New Jersey monument, on the site of Maxwell’s camp, is as fine as most of the monuments in the Park. Don’t miss it.

Speaking of monuments, there is a statue of General Von Steuben near the parade ground, where he drilled and retrained the army much of the winter. He is on foot, similar to the statue of him we have at Monmouth. The irony is that the Valley Forge statue was put up in 1915 by the National German American Alliance. What bad timing, with our entry into World War I against Germany right around the corner! The statue is an exact copy of one erected at Utica, NY.

Not all of the approximately 2500 poor souls who died at Valley Forge actually died on site. A significant number passed away at the numerous hospitals that were set up in towns nearby.

The major supply depot for the encampment was located at the Pawling farm, on the north (opposite) side of the Schuylkill River. The huge barn that was used is still standing and is quite a marvel to see; it is by far the largest barn I have ever seen. The Pawling farm was also used as an encampment for many of the troops when Washington moved his men out of Valley Forge proper in June because the site was becoming unhealthful.

Washington’s headquarters at the Isaac Potter house is worth seeing, though it is difficult of access because of a rather long walk from the parking area. The house was built in the 1770s, and the area around the building was reworked with several additional exhibits in 2009 (including recreated huts for his headquarters guard).

Some 72 acres next to the park was purchased by the American Revolution Center in 2007 for their proposed Museum of the American Revolution. When local objections led to zoning issues, a compromise was worked out. The Revolution Center people donated their land to the Park, and in return received form the Federal government the property at 3rd and Chestnut in downtown Philadelphia where they constructed their planned Museum of the American Revolution, which opened this spring (see accompanying article).

Valley Forge National Park is open all year round and is worth the visit; note that the buildings are closed on major holidays).