**FRIENDS OF MONMOUTH BATTLEFIELD**

**NEWSLETTER MARCH 2023**

**BIG REENACTMENT PLANNED FOR JUNE 17-18**

Our commemoration of the 245th anniversary of the Battle of Monmouth will be celebrated with a reenactment on the weekend of June 17-18, 2023. Our reenactment had to be cancelled in 2020 and 2021 because of the COVID virus, though in 2021 we substituted two weekends of living history. Last year we returned to our regular reenactment activities. Plans are to run a larger full scale reenactment this year in honor of the 245th anniversary of the battle. In fact, this will be our largest event in the past ten years. It will be a focused “national” event for the major reenactor organizations, including the BAR (Brigade of the Revolution) the BB (British Brigade), and CL (Continental Line). We are expecting well over 500 reenactors to attend, plus more than ten cannons and ten horsemen. There will probably be two reenactment events each day, plus numerous talks and historical presentations both in the camps and the visitor center. More talks, tours and presentations (but no reenactment) will be held the next weekend, June 24-25. Additional events and tours will be held every weekend all month, followed by special presentations at the Park on July 4 (see enclosed calendar). Detailed daily event schedules will be posted in early June.

A special heads up that a huge reenactment is being planned to celebrate the 250th anniversary of the battle in June. The date for the 2028 event has not been set yet – we will surely let you know as soon as it is decided on!

**SUCCESSFUL ANNUAL MEETING HELD IN DECEMBER**

Our annual meeting was held on December 10, 2022, in the meeting room at Monmouth Battlefield State Park. Ballots for election of officers and for approval of our annual plan and budget had been sent out by mail and were tallied at the meeting.

Trustees whose terms expired this year were reelected (Caralee Bava-Grygo, George Dawson, Eric Doherty, Kathy Doherty, and Frances Raleigh). One new trustee was elected, Karen Timper. Current officers were elected for another term (David Martin as President, George Dawson as Vice President, Kathy Doherty as Treasurer and Fran Raleigh as Secretary). The budget offered for 2023 and the annual plan proposed for 2023 were both approved.

Our thanks to those who attended the annual meeting, and our special thanks to all our volunteer officers and trustees.

**2023 MEMBERSHIP DRIVE CONTINUES**

Membership renewal forms for 2023 are enclosed. We really appreciate your support. We are especially appreciative of our 40 life members. Current total membership is 110. Last year we had 140 members, so we still have a ways to go to match that total. We cannot do all that we do without the support of our membership. Please include your email address on the form.

**CRAIG HOUSE NEWS**

We are very pleased to report the completion of a major stage of restoration work at the historic Craig House. These projects, all funded and carried out by the State, include: new roofing, new gutters, new siding, painting the exterior of the house, and installing new doors and windows.

The State is currently planning to upgrade the Craig House visitor parking lot.

All this work supplements the several projects carried out by the Friends of Monmouth Battlefield in 2015-2022, when we repaired or replaced twelve windows, one door, and the cellar door. Most of these projects were carried out with the aid of matching grants from the Monmouth County Historical Commission.

Our next project being undertaken by the Friends is to carry out the repair of the big barn door at the Craig House barn, which was much damaged by a storm last summer. This project will cost well over $10,000, and we have a new grant for $4000 from Monmouth County Historical Commission to help carry it out. The Craig House barn dates to about 1840 and is probably built on the site of the earlier barn, which was most likely used as a hospital during and after the Battle of Monmouth.

Craig House will open for the season on April 2, 2023, and will be open on Sundays from 1-4 PM, through December 3.

**TOURS AND TALKS MAINTAIN SCHEDULE**

Our popular guided tours of the Park have maintained their schedule, when weather permits. The January 1 tour had almost 100 participants, the February 5 tour had 20, and the March 6 tour also had about 20. Thanks to FOMB board members John Resto and David Martin for leading these tours.

FOMB President David Martin gave two talks in February, on Black and Native American Troops at the battle, and on General George Washington’s movements and decisions in the battle. He also gave one presentation in March, on Molly Pitcher, in honor of Women’s History Month. The talks were held in the Visitor Center auditorium and averaged over 25 participants each.

Upcoming talks and tours this spring are on the enclosed calendar of events.

**SPRING PARK AND VISITOR CENTER**

**HOURS ANNOUNCED**

The Park Visitor Center is now open regular hours after being closed to the public off and on during 2020-2021 because of COVID*.* It was open regular hours last year and is now open from 9 AM to 4 PM from Wednesdays to Saturdays. There may be extended hours this summer, depending on available staffing.

Our gift shop in the Visitor Center is open on Sundays from 1-4 PM, and occasionally on Saturdays when we have staffing. Thanks go to Andy Beagle, George Dawson, John Resto, and David Martin for managing the gift shop.

Currently the park gate hours are from 8AM to 6PM. Around Memorial Day, the gate hours will change to the summer hours of 8AM to 8PM.

**PARK LIBRARY UPDATE**

Work is finally underway for the construction of custom made bookcases for our library to be located in the old wing of the Visitor Center. It is to be named in honor of past FOMB President and Battle of Monmouth scholar James T. Raleigh. Of course, we will keep you posted of our progress; hopefully it will be done by the end of the year.

FOMB regularly purchases new titles on New Jersey in the Revolution for our reference library, especially those having to do with the battle of Monmouth.

We also assist the Park staff in their research by paying for their access to key research sites, and by purchasing important research books that they request. The Park staff is currently studying the participation of Hessian troops at Monmouth; several units were on the field but not engaged in the fighting.. Recent books obtained by us for Park staff use include: *A Hessian Officer’s Diary of the American Revolution, Translated from an Anonymous Ansbach-Bayreuth Diary and the Prechtel Diary; Anspach-Bayreuth Diaries from the Revolutionary War; Defeat, Disaster, and Dedication: The Diaries of two Hessian Offers, Jakob Piel and Andreas Wiederheld; Diaries of Two Anspach Jaegers; Diary of a Hessian Grenadier of Colonel Rall’s Regiment, Written by Johannes Ruberg; Journal of the Hesse-Cassel Jaeger Corps;* and *The Diary of Lieutenant von Barrelenes and other von Done Documents.*

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**FOMB SPONSORS NEW STUDENT ESSAY CONTEST**

The Friends of Monmouth Battlefield (FOMB) is sponsoring a new student essay contest. It is open to all Freehold Regional School District seniors. The prize is a $500 scholarship. Entries are due by March 31, 2023. All submissions are done by the students through the district website and we will receive copies online from the district after March 31. Winner will be announced April 21.

Selection Criteria for the contest are as follows.

1. Be a graduating high school senior residing in the Freehold Regional High School District.

2. Accepted to matriculate at a college or university (2 or 4 year) for the Fall 2023 semester (indicated on student application).

3. Applicants will submit an essay (750 -1500 words) on the following topic: “Why was the Battle of Monmouth critical to the overall success of the American Revolution”?

4. Applicant must have been involved in at least one school activity (indicated on student application).

5. Teacher letter of recommendation submitted with essay.

**WEEKEND IN OLD MONMOUTH SET FOR MAY 6-7**

Each year the Monmouth County Historical Commission sponsors “Weekend in Old Monmouth” tours and open houses. As our part, we will have the historic Craig House open from 10 AM to 4 PM on May 6 and from 11 AM to 4 PM on May 7. We will have our usual battlefield walking tour May 7 at 1:30 PM, and the Park Visitor Center will be open its regular hours both days. Nearby sites related to the battle, including the Village Inn in Englishtown, Monmouth County Historical Museum in Freehold, and Covenhoven House in Freehold, will also be open.

**SCHEDULE OF EVENTS FOR SPRING 2023**

**April 2, 2023 (Sun) Walking tour of the battlefield.**

**Meet at Visitor Center at 1:30 PM.**

**April 2, 2023 (Sun) Craig House opens for the season (1-4 PM)**

**April 23, 2023 (Sun) Driving tour of the battle area east of Freehold. Starts at the Battle of Monmouth Monument on Court Street in Freehold. Then visit two important seldom seen areas of the morning portion of the battle, the East Morass and Briar Hill. Meet at 1:30 PM at Visitor Center.**

**May 6, 2023 (Sat) Bird Walk on the battlefield. Identify birds that live here or**

**pass through in the spring, Meet at 9 AM at the Visitor Center.**

**May 6, 2023 (Sat) “Weekend in Old Monmouth” programming, Craig House open 10 AM**

**to 4 PM**

**May 7, 2023 (Sun) Walking tour of the battlefield.**

**Meet at Visitor Center at 1:30 PM**

**May 7, 2023 (Sun) “Weekend in Old Monmouth” programming. Craig House open 11 AM**

**to 4 PM**

**May 21, 2023 (Sun) Walking tour “The Fight at the Point of Woods.” Visit the**

**scene of fierce fighting in the early afternoon. Meet at Visitor Center at 1:30 PM.**

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REVOLUTIONARY WAR DAYS IN MONMOUTH COUNTY

FOMB Programs June 3 to July 4, 2023

June 3, 2023 (Sat) Driving tour covering the British approach route to

the battle. Meeting place and itinerary TBA.

**June 4, 2023 (Sun) Walking tour of the battlefield (Hedge Row and**

**Parsonage). Meet at the Visitor Center at 1:30 PM.**

June 10, 2023 (Sat) Driving tour covering General Lafayette’s march from Cranbury

through Hightstown to Robbins’ Tavern (Clarksburg) the two days

before the battle. Meeting place and time TBA. In conjunction with

Cranbury Historical & Preservation Society.

June 11, 2023 (Sun) Driving tour to visit the site of the American encampments

at Ponolopon Bridge and Englishtown the day before the

battle of Monmouth. Meet at Visitor Center at 1:30 PM.

**June 17, 2023 (Sat) Annual reenactment of the Battle of Monmouth**

**Encampment and programs 10 AM-4 PM.**

**June 18, 2023 (Sun) Annual reenactment of the Battle of Monmouth**

**Encampment and programs 10 AM – 3PM.**

**June 24, 2023 (Sat) 245th Anniversary of the Battle of Monmouth.**

**Special programs and tours 10 AM-4 PM.**

**SCHEDULE OF EVENTS CONTINUED**

**June 25, 2023 (Sun) 245th Anniversary of the Battle of Monmouth.**

**Special programs and tours 11 AM-4 PM.**

July 1, 2023 (Sat) Driving tour of British route after the battle from

Monmouth CH to Sandy Hook. Time and itinerary TBA. In

Conjunction with Cranbury Historical & Preservation Society.

**July 2, 2023 (Sun) Walking tour of the battlefield.**

**Meet at the Visitor Center at 1:30 PM**

**July 4, 2023 (Tues) Commemoration of Independence Day at the Park.**

**Outside Visitor Center, 1 PM.**

**FOMB BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

(end of term in parentheses)

Caralee Bava-Grygo (2025) Freehold, NJ

Andrew Beagle (2024) South Plainfield, NJ

George Dawson (2025) New Brunswick, NJ

Eric Doherty (2025) Old Bridge, NJ

Kathy Doherty (2025) Old Bridge, NJ

Dr. David Martin (2024) East Windsor, NJ

Marilyn Miller (2024) Toms River, NJ

Fran Raleigh (2025) Colts Neck, NJ

David Shakespeare (2024) Colts Neck, NJ

John Resto (2023) South Plainfield, NJ

Karen Timper (2025) East Brunswick, NJ

Peter Wagner (2024) Englishtown, NJ

**OFFICERS (term ends December 2023)**

President David Martin

Vice President George Dawson

Secretary Frances Raleigh

Treasurer Kathleen Doherty

**FOMB RECEIVES OPERATING GRANT**

We are pleased to report that FOMB has received an operating grant of $3800 from the Monmouth County Historical Commission. The grant is to be used for our newsletters and brochures and for office expenses. Treasurer Kathy Doherty attended the grant presentation ceremony on March 6.

**Our website address is:** [**www.friendsofmonmouth.org**](http://www.friendsofmonmouth.org)

**2023 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 \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Email address \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

***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**

**PO Box 122**

**Tennent, NJ 07763**

**PARK STAFF PREPARES HISTORY BROCHURES**

About three years ago the staff at the Park began preparing a number of illustrated tri-fold brochures on different aspects of the battle and the battlefield. There are currently 14 different topics available (see list below), with more in preparation. These brochures are available on request at the Park office in the Visitor Center.

Three additional informational brochures and tour guides are provided by the Friends. These are a walking tour guide to the battlefield from Combs Hill to the Parsonage, a walking tour guide of the Perrine Hill area (where Molly Pitcher fought), and a guide to the historic Craig House. These are available at the Visitor Center and at kiosks on the field. Their texts are also posted on our FOMB website.

TRI-FOLD BROCHURES AVAILABLE AT PARK OFFICE

Places of the Battle Series

The Seven Farms at the Time of the Battle

Perrine Ridge

The Hedgerow

The Morning Battle Outside the Park

Combs Hill

Units of the Battle Series

British Grenadiers

Picked Men

People of the Battle Series

Lt. Col. Henry Monckton

Lt. Col. Eleazer Oswald

Brig Gen. Anthony Wayne

Maj. Gen. Wilhelm von Steuben

Lt. Col. Thomas-Antoine de Mauduit du Plessis

Maj. Gen. Charles Lee

Civil War Series

Camp Vredenburg

Additional titles are in preparation.



* **Funding has been made possible for this newsletter**
* **in part by an operating grant from the New Jersey Historical**
* **Commission, a Division of the Department of State, through grant funds administered**

**by the Monmouth County Historical Commmission.**

**BACKGROUD ON LEUTZE PAINTING CONTROVERSY**

Artist Emanuel Leutze (1816-1868) is best known for his famous painting “Washington Crossing the Delaware.” Another of his works is “Washington Rallying the troops at Monmouth,” one version of which is on display at the Monmouth County Historical Association museum (MCHA) in Freehold, NJ. It was painted around 1857. A significant controversy has arisen at MCHA after a rendition of Leutze’s “Washington Crossing the Delaware” owned by someone else sold for many millions of dollars. MCHA realized they had a gold mine hanging on their wall, so they have started to think about selling it in order to improve their museum and additional holdings. The following article against such a sale has been penned by Randall Gabrielan, who is the Monmouth County Historian. It is reprinted here with his permission.

**Oppose the Monmouth County Historical Association Consideration to Sell Its Most Important Object**

By Randall Gabrielan

The Monmouth County historical community was roiled in October 2022 by the revelation that trustees of the Monmouth County Historical Association, headquartered in Freehold, were contemplating the sale of their most iconic and valuable object, the Emanuel Leutze painting “Washington Rallying the Troops at Monmouth.” The striking image is a representation of the mounted general exhorting his forces at a crucial moment in this vital battle that some consider the turning point in the Revolutionary War. The sale plan was prompted by the Association’s recent awareness that the painting is worth far more than the organization had believed, an inference drawn from the sale of a replica of the even better-known Leutze work “Washington Crossing the Delaware.” A crisis stems from a sale not being an issue of money or value, but an action that is forbidden by museum ethics as established by the American Alliance of Museums and rules and procedures of the Association for deaccessioning objects in its collections. Alliance guidelines permit sales only for the purchase of other objects or for care of collections. Examples of legitimate sales would include duplicate items or possession of higher quality similar works. The governing principles of the Monmouth County Historical Association require that a deaccessioning be approved by both its curator and director. Both are adamantly opposed to the sale of the painting. Thus, the issue cannot be determined by value or money as the Association’s internal structure precludes the sale. A sale would also reflect a betrayal of the trust of a public that reveres the painting and has entrusted the Association to preserve the history of Monmouth County. A second betrayal would be the intentions of the donor and his motivation to give the painting to the Association in the belief that the painting belonged in Freehold, and that the Association would be its permanent caretaker. The possibilities of a sale have enraged statewide historical organizations, involved historians, and many others, including the present and past mayors of the Borough of Freehold. Expressions opposing a sale were swift and fervent. They sent the trustees a letter detailing why a sale would be unethical and wrong. The New Jersey Historical Commission and New Jersey Historic Trust conveyed strong statements of opposition. The Monmouth County Historical Commission also opposes a sale. Statements from the Association that appear to lack merit include security and insurance. The museum in Freehold has an excellent security system. Fine Arts insurance is typically not costly. Statements from the trustees have been noncommittal and even evasive, notably the claim that no decision has been

**LEUTZE ARTICLE CONT.**

made to sell. This is perceived as a thinly disguised assertion that a sale is under consideration or can be resurrected at any time. Their more feeble statements point to many inexperienced new trustees and a continuation of fact gathering. The only relevant facts are museum collection standards and their own rules that preclude a sale not sanctioned by their director and curator. Newer trustees should have had a prompt lesson in museum ethics. Why would the trustees want to even consider disposing of their greatest object? It is strictly for the money. The Association also operates five historic houses that suffer from deferred maintenance. The present board appears not to be stellar fundraisers. Their other dysfunction appears to be operational as the museum, commemorating its 125th anniversary this year, remains inexplicably closed. An appraiser can place a figure on an object while the market will determine value. The board must learn that integrity and ethics are priceless. Until the board denies a plan to sell the painting with a statement that is definitive, without qualification and timeless, the historical community must continue to voice their objections.

You may write to the executive director and the director of collections at the addresses below:

Shannon Eason, Executive Director seadon@monmouthhistory.org Bernadette Rogoff, Director of Collections [brogoff@monmouthhistory.org](mailto:brogoff@monmouthhistory.org). The Association may also be addressed at 70 Court Street, Freehold NJ 07728.

**LETTER TO MCHA: FOMB BOARD OPPOSES**

**SALE OF LEUTZE PAINTING ON MOMOUTH**

The Friends of Monmouth Battlefield are dedicated to protecting, preserving and interpreting both the military and social history of the Monmouth Campaign of 1778 including the cultural landscapes of both the battlefield and related sites beyond the Battlefield Park. The preservation and interpretation of the Monmouth Campaign is vital link in commemorating Monmouth County’s and New Jersey’s role as the Crossroads of the American Revolution.

Founded in 1898 by Monmouth County residents, the not-for-profit Monmouth County Historical Association’s mission, as published, is to “discover, procure, preserve, and perpetuate whatever relates to the history of Monmouth County. It is not a matter of coincidence that these two organizations are linked by their respective focus and mission of serving and educating the community through the area’s rich and storied history. Since 1938, Emanuel Leutze’s painting of “Washington Rallying the Troops at Monmouth” has hung in the MCHA museum helping to both teach and inspire all that have seen it for close to a century. It has been for generations, without question, the signature item in the museum’s collection. We – the Board and Trustees of the Friends of Monmouth Battlefield are deeply concerned and perplexed as to the rumors of the sale of this treasured item. In a few years we will be celebrating the 250th anniversary of the Revolution that brought about the greatest nation the world has seen. The sale of this painting would result in an inconceivable and irreparable loss to our town, the County and New Jersey. This painting should and must remain in the museum to continue to be seen and appreciated by future generations.

Respectfully, Board and Trustees, Friends of Monmouth Battlefield

Penned by Trustee David Shakespeare

**HISTORY OF THE SUTFIN HOUSE**

*Editor’s note: The following essay is courtesy of Preservation New Jersey. The Park may be on the verge of receiving a major grant for work on the Sutfin House. We will keep you posted.*

The Derick Sutfin House in Monmouth Battlefield State Park is the park’s oldest structure, and witnessed some of the Revolution’s most dramatic scenes. Jacob Sutfin constructed the dwelling after purchasing the property in 1718. During the Battle of Monmouth on June 28, 1778, the farmhouse was in the midst of the action, caught in the crossfire of the biggest field artillery duel of the American Revolution. It is cited by name in at least one account of the battle, and it is shown on battle maps. One of the most dramatic and best documented actions of the battle took place in its apple orchard and along its fence lines. Derick Sutfin’s sons were in the militia. The day before the battle, at least one was involved with the capture of fifteen British grenadiers doing their laundry. When Derick Sutfin died in 1796, two of his neighbors carefully inventoried the contents of the dwelling, outbuildings, and fields. The exceptional detail of this document allows historians the unique opportunity to interpret Federal Period farm life with a record of every room and every shelf of the dwelling, the looms in his weaving shop, the tools in the barn, and the colors of each of his cattle.

The Sutfin House is one of three houses on the battlefield that existed on the day of the battle, the other two being the Craig House and the Rhea-Applegate House. Now a two-and-a-half-story house as a result of additions in the 1820s and 1840s, at its core is a one-and-a-third-story Dutch-framed dwelling with the “big room” in front and two small chambers in the rear aisle. The massive joist that spans the east end of the big room once supported the chimney of a jamb-less Dutch fireplace. Apart from its significance as a surviving early eighteenth-century Dutch farmhouse, it is an important point of reference in understanding how the battle ebbed and flowed over the course of the day. The cider orchard behind the house served as an anchor for the right flank of the British army. Later in the day, it witnessed the Continental counterattack.

Monmouth Battlefield State Park was created by the State of New Jersey between 1963 and 1974 through the purchase of numerous parcels of land in anticipation of the battle’s bicentennial. The battlefield itself underwent an $870,000 landscape restoration in 1993-1998. A new eight-million-dollar visitor center was opened in 2013. The Sutfin House and the Rhea-Applegate House have been stabilized over the years but never fully restored; only the Craig House has undergone a full restoration and is open to the public. All three of the houses are suffering from deterioration, with the Sutfin House being in the worst condition despite being the only home visible from the Visitor’s Center.

Monmouth Battlefield State Park is a jewel in the crown of New Jersey’s historic sites. It is of national significance, and is a major tourist attraction. The threat to the Sutfin House, a critical structure for understanding Federal Period farm life and the battle itself, is immediate. The House is in such a severely deteriorated condition that there have been discussions of implementing triage, and abandoning the house to demolition by neglect so available funds can be used to maintain two nearby homes. With the 250th anniversary of the battle less than a decade away, the State of New Jersey should be moving to allocate sufficient funds to prepare the park, and this specific home, for its upcoming part on the national stage in 2028.