



A Newsletter from the Princeton Battlefield Society – Fall 2024

YOUNG PATRIOTS DAY 2024

The weather was beautiful, with a festive atmosphere for over 400 kids and their families, as well as presenters, demonstrators and volunteers, at our September 15th Young Patriots Day. Thank you to the New Jersey Grays and Lamb's Artillery, to General George Washington and Benjamin Franklin, staff at the Thomas Clarke House, presenters and demonstrators, and to our outstanding team of volunteers for making this year's event the best ever.

Thank you as well to our Young Patriots and their families for joining us.



Thank you to our partners . . .

- Bordentown Historical Society
- Crossroads & RevolutionNJ
- Daughters of the American Revolution, Princeton Chapter & Jersey Blue Chapter
- Friends of Washington Crossing Park – PA
- Friends of Whitehill Mansion
- Historical Society of Princeton
- Ocean County Cultural & Heritage Commission
- The Old Barracks
- The Old Penster
- Princeton Friends Meeting
- Abby Readlinger, Author
- Rockingham
- Sons of the American Revolution, New Jersey
- Robert Skead, Author
- The Trent House
- Washington-Rochambeau Trail, New Jersey

(Photos by Greysboro Studios)

COMMITMENTS TO NEW JERSEY'S REVOLUTIONARY WAR HISTORY

State Senator Andrew Zwicker presented a \$1.3 million check from the State of New Jersey to Shawn McBurney, Director of Government Relations at the American Battlefield Trust (ABT), as an investment in the State's heritage as the "Crossroads of the American Revolution." They were joined by PBS' president, Ben Strong.

This commitment was spearheaded by Senator Zwicker, Assemblywoman Michelle Drulis, and Assemblyman Roy Freiman. It will be used for battlefield archaeology, planning for a Visitor Education Center, and ABT's overall plans to re-imagine the Battlefield as it was in 1777.



In a separate ceremony, a similar check was presented by Speaker Craig Coughlin, Assemblyman Roy Freiman, and Assemblywoman Michelle Drulis to Ben Strong and ABT's Shawn McBurney and Luke McKnight.

As a commitment to the 250th anniversary planned for 2026, Senator Zwicker stated, "If Washington and Continental troops don't win the Battle of Princeton, then perhaps we don't win the war at all. We want to ensure that places like Princeton and all of our Revolutionary sites have the resources they need to be ready for the 250th."

This fall, new interpretive signs were installed at the



battlefield. The final will be a new topographical map made possible with grants to PBS from Americana Corner and the Society of the Cincinnati in the State of New Jersey. All signs were designed by Crafted Action with a battlefield interpretation grant from the American Battlefield Protection Program.

As the battlefield prepares for landscape rehabilitation phases, South River Heritage Consulting initiated an archaeological survey of park lands, supported by a Historic Site Management Grant from the New Jersey Historic Trust. In September members of the media and guests were invited to observe the proceedings and interact with the project team while working the field near the Clarke House. Archaeologist Wade Catts noted, "the fact that we are picking them [case shot and musket balls] up here tells you that there are infantry formations standing in this field."

Archaeologists have already unearthed hundreds of artifacts, some dating to the Revolutionary War era. "We've already picked up artifacts in areas that nobody had rarely looked before," said Catts. "We're identifying battle-related material in some of those places."

The ABT, as a part of the rehabilitation phase, is restoring the Trace/Saw Mill Road, the route on the battlefield that General Washington and his army travelled on January 3, 1777. The PBS board pledged \$25,000 for this restoration as a commitment to ABT's interpretation plan, "Washington's Legacy." To date, almost \$28,000 has been raised. We thank all donors, including leadership gifts from the Sons of the Revolution-NJ, the Artist Preservation Group, Mark & Rachel Herr, the Switlik Foundation, Doug Shavel, Veronica Bonnet, Amy & Carmine DiSibio, Todd Quackenbush, and Tom Pyle. (Donations can still be made to this campaign through December 31 by going to www.pbs1777.org and clicking the donate button. Note that your donation is for the Trace/Saw Mill Road restoration.)

THE CLARKE HOUSE ARCHIVES

The need to organize, catalogue, and protect the archives in the Clarke House has been discussed for years. The time was right, in preparation for the 250th anniversary, to implement protective and preservation plans. Thanks to a grant from the Society of Colonial Wars in the State of New Jersey we are doing it!

The primary issue has been the lack of staff time to devote to the massive task. State staff commits most of its time to visitors, tours, maintenance, and management. With this six-month grant PBS retained Hannah Lee to serve as our archivist and to get the work done.

The issues include a large collection of documents, artifacts, and other material culture haphazardly sorted and stored. Concern also involved compromising them because of the storage methods and control of temperature, humidity, and light. With limited space within the current building, protective alternatives had to be devised.

We are excited with many of the results to date:

- Photographs from the mid-18th to early-19th century, many taken by former resident, Henry Hale, uncovered.

- A collection of letters exchanged between various Clarke family members (late-18th to mid-19th century) and multiple family documents (late-18th to early-19th century).
- The Clarke Family bible (dated 1811).
- Newspaper clippings, correspondence, and other documents detailing land acquisitions and disputes.
- Over 30 Clarke family documents dated between 1722 and 1867 in the New Jersey State Archives.
- A collection of library books and academic journals and magazines, which has now been catalogued.
- The current archaeological work undertaken by the DEP and American Battlefield Trust has contributed to new artifacts bringing the collection to well-over 1,000 items collected during past archaeological digs and by staff and park visitors. Unfortunately, about 50% have incomplete or lack any documentation. (Might be a project for the future.)
- And the list goes on - - as does the six-month archival project, thanks to the Society of Colonial Wars.

EXPERIENCE THE BATTLE OF PRINCETON

Join us on January 5, 2025 for the 248th Anniversary of the Battle of Princeton and a memorial wreath-laying ceremony. Register at www.pbs1777.org. More information will be forwarded with your registration.

- Photo Credit: Michael Rothman



A SPECIAL VISIT

Lorna Hainesworth, benefactor of our Experience the Battle of Princeton, visited in August for a first-hand tour of the Battlefield and a dinner with PBS leaders at Eno Terra, hosted by Raoul Momo and his family. A stop on her visit was the Millstone River bridge commemorating Washington's troop movements after the Battle of Princeton as it marched to winter encampment in Morristown.

★★★ UPDATES ★★★

2024 BATTLEFIELD TOURS SET RECORD

Our Battlefield Tour Program set a record this year by registering over 450 participants, almost a 40% increase over last year. Tours took place over eleven Sundays from May thru October. Congratulations to our Historical Interpreters, Larry Kidder, David Price, Roger Williams, Tom Kane, and Will Krakower, and to Kim Gallagher for his ten crucial days maps. Thanks also to Justin Hizny and Armen Dermaderosian for helping at the registration table.

REVOLUTIONNJ's 5K RUN AT PRINCETON

RevolutionNJ has launched a series of 5k races at American Revolution sites and welcomed over 100 runners and walkers to the September 8 event at the Princeton Battlefield. PBS had an information table at the race and talked to runners about the battle. Runners included president Ben Strong and member Ken Fredeen.

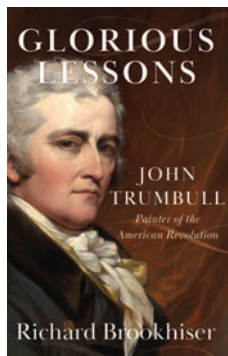


OFFSPRING OF THE MERCER OAK



Amy Ricco, professor at Mercer County Community College, presented one of the many “offspring” of the iconic Mercer Oak, generated from acorns collected and nurtured as a class project, to Will Krakower during another “acorn collection” event. The one-year-old sapling will be planted at the Battlefield and joins two other saplings planted at Frog Hollow at the Springdale Golf Course

PBS INAUGURATES “THE CADWALADER LECTURE SERIES”



Richard Brookhiser, author of *Glorious Lessons: John Trumbull, Painter of the American Revolution*, was the featured speaker at our inaugural Cadwalader Lecture Series on November 6 at the Nassau Club, Princeton.

Trumbull made it his mission to record the American Revolution, “giving visual form to what most citizens of the United States thought – that they had brought into the world a great and unprecedented political experiment.” Trumbull’s paintings adorn the Capitol Rotunda. He painted “The Death of General Mercer at the Battle of Princeton, January 3, 1777.”

Mr. Brookhiser is senior editor of *National Review* and a prominent author of American history. His books include *Founding Father: Rediscovering George Washington* and *Founder's Son: A Life of Abraham Lincoln*.

The lecture series honors General John Cadwalader who served, with his Philadelphia Associates, under Washington at Princeton. “The lecture series begins our planned celebrations of the nation’s 250th anniversary,” noted Ben Strong, PBS president.



FALL CLEAN UP DAY

The Park is ready for Winter because of our team of volunteers who joined us on October 19 at our annual fall clean up. Thank you to them all.

SALUTING OUR VOLUNTEERS

Behind the scenes at our events and activities at the Battlefield is a corps of PBS volunteers contributing their time and energy to fulfill our commitment to American Revolution education and the landscape of the Princeton Battlefield State Park. We tip our hats to our volunteer team of almost 100 who give thousands of hours to make a difference. Thank you!

★★★ UPDATES ★★★

PRINCETON UNIVERSITY SUMMER JOURNAL STUDENTS HOSTED

Larry Kidder, on behalf of PBS, provided students in Princeton University's summer journalism program a first-hand look at the Battle of Princeton and its cultural landscape in August. The students were guided by Larry through the details of the Battle of Princeton and the people involved. He was also interviewed for a front-page article in the program's newsletter. Thanks, Larry.

NEW CLARKE HOUSE EXHIBIT RECEIVES AWARD OF RECOGNITION

The New Jersey Historical Commission has selected the Princeton Battlefield Society as the recipient of an Award of Recognition to acknowledge the new interpretative exhibit in the Thomas Clarke House Museum in advance of the nation's 250th anniversary. A ceremony is planned for March 2025.

PBS TO FUND THE PURCHASE OF LIVING HISTORY CLOTHING

The PBS Board approved a grant to fund the purchase of period clothing for staff and volunteers to present authentic living history presentations at the Clarke House and battlefield events. As explained by Will Krakower, "This upgrade in our wardrobe is long overdue and will fit in nicely with our plans to improve living history interpretation in and around the Clarke House."

NEW THOMAS CLARKE VIDEO

The final touches on a new video featuring Thomas Clarke are underway for release in early 2025. Made possible with a grant from the Mercer County Cultural & Heritage Commission, the video portrays Clarke and his family who reacted to and endured the Battle of Princeton. Thomas is portrayed by Ian Mulreaney from Burlington County. It was directed by Paul Kelley with videography by Matt Matrale. The video will appear on the PBS website.

MEDALLION REPAIR AND RESTORATION

The Order of Founders and Patriots of America provided PBS with a grant to repair and restore the medallion in the Memorial Grove, located behind the Colonnade. This is our initial step to upgrade the area as a fitting memorial to all who fought and died at the Battle of Princeton.

The memorial was erected in 1918 in memory of unknown soldiers, including fifteen American and twenty-one British, buried nearby. Engraved on the tablet are words from Alfred Noyes' poem, "Princeton." Noyes was a visiting professor at Princeton University and later became Poet Laureate of England. He wrote his poem 140 years after the battle, at a time when American and British soldiers were fighting together (World War I) in support of their common heritage of freedom. The opening lines of the poem are quoted on the plaque:

*"Here Freedom stood by slaughtered friend and foe,
And, ere the wrath paled or that sunset died,
Looked through the ages; then, with eyes aglow,
Laid them to wait that future, side by side."*

In Memoriam

The Board of Trustees sends its condolences to the family of

Jean Hultgren

a long-time trustee of the
Princeton Battlefield Society.

Jean will always be remembered for her
welcoming smiles at Battlefield events.

The John and Marsha Beidler Family Charitable Fund

has made a memorial donation to the
Princeton Battlefield Society.

We gratefully accept this commitment to our mission
and extend condolences to the Beidler Family.

★★★ UPDATES ★★★

QUESTION: WHAT HAPPENED TO THE BRITISH CAPTURED AT THE BATTLE OF PRINCETON?

Thanks to Will Krakower, Historical Resource Specialist at the Park, we have the answer: *"The British troops captured at Princeton joined the Continental Army on its march to Morristown. Shortly after arriving in Morristown, Washington ordered Col. Webb's Connecticut Regiment to take roughly 211 regulars and an unknown number of officers to Peekskill, New York where they were turned over to the custody of Governor Jonathan Trumbull of the State of Connecticut. Trumbull held them in Hartford for a brief time before sending them off a few*

at a time to the care of General Benedict Arnold in Providence, Rhode Island. By late February/early March most of the officers were exchanged in Newport, Rhode Island. As for the privates, it appears that some of them were 'paroled to the country' especially if they were found to have any ability at skilled labor."

[NOTE: Governor Jonathan Trumbull was the father of John Trumbull, the focus of Richard Brookhiser's book, *"Glorious Lessons."*]

YOU CAN PROTECT THE PAST FOR THE FUTURE

It's easy to protect our Nation's past and the heritage of the Battle of Princeton by remembering the Princeton Battlefield Society in your will or estate plan. It's for the future.

JOIN THE PRINCETON BATTLEFIELD SOCIETY AS WE KEEP AMERICAN HISTORY AND ITS HERITAGE ALIVE! BECOME A 2025 MEMBER OR PROGRAM DONOR.

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- ☐ Continental Line (\$250)
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- ☐ Revolutionary (\$50)
- ☐ Member (\$25)

OR

As a Partner in providing exciting programs and services throughout 2025 with a donation: Continue the work of the Princeton Battlefield Society in protecting, preserving, and promoting the heritage of the Battle of Princeton and of America's founding with your donation of \$_____.

Mail your Membership or Program donation, with this coupon, to:

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P.O. Box 7645
Princeton, New Jersey 08543

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Address: _____

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OR

Go to www.pbs1777.org, click the "2025 Annual Campaign" or "Donate" icon to make a donation.

THE PRINCETON BATTLEFIELD SOCIETY GRATEFULLY ACKNOWLEDGES AND THANKS OUR FRIENDS AND COMMUNITY PARTNERS FOR SUPPORTING OUR EVENTS, PROGRAMS, AND INITIATIVES IN 2024.

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Michael Wedeking
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Wildflowers of Princeton Junction
Roger Williams
Yankee Doodle Tap Room
Domenique Collins Yermolayev

Holiday Wishes!



*The Trustees of the
Princeton Battlefield
Society extend their best
wishes for the Holidays
and throughout 2025*

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RECOGNIZES 2024 ANNUAL CAMPAIGN MEMBERS (AS OF NOVEMBER 1)
FOR THEIR DEDICATION TO OUR SHARED COMMITMENT TO
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