



A Newsletter from the Princeton Battlefield Society - Winter 2022

EXPERIENCE THE BATTLE OF PRINCETON

January 2, 2022 dawned overcast and wet from the previous day's rain, but temperatures in the 50s belied Winter. Approximately 100 British and American reenactors appeared on the Princeton battlefield. A crowd of over 450 spectators from all parts of New Jersey, as well as from Pennsylvania, New York, Delaware, and Maryland, grew silent. Will Krakower, Historical Interpreter for the NJ State Park, welcomed everyone and introduced Michael Russell, president, who related the significance of the battle and of the men who fought here. Then, with a loud "HUZZAH!" from Krakower, an opening volley of muskets from the British's 17th Regiment of Foot came from the western ridge of the field. "Experience the Battle of Princeton" had begun.



The British swept into the swale and were met by Mercer's Brigade. Brigadier General Hugh Mercer went down and was bayoneted seven times by the British. Delaware's Colonel John Haslet was killed, Captain William Leslie of the 17th Regiment was mortally wounded. The British had the advantage and began to advance across the Quaker farms of William Clarke and his brother, Thomas, as the Americans retreated. From the high ground near the Thomas Clarke farmhouse, American artillery units under Captain Joseph Moulder opened fire which was returned by British artillery. The sharp

sounds of muskets were heard all over the field, and men from both sides went down. And as the battle hit its peak, General George Washington appeared from



the northeast side of the field leading two regiments of experienced New England Continental troops, sweeping the outnumbered British back in retreat. Washington and his troops had won the day.

The “Experience the Battle of Princeton” reenactment was over and the large audience of spectators applauded.

Reenactors remained on the battlefield to discuss weapons and uniforms with spectators, as well as to offer more battle insight and historic interpretation. The level of interest in the Battle of Princeton underscored why living history is beneficial to a greater understanding of our heritage.

Following the reenactment a wreath laying ceremony at the Colonnade, organized by the SAR’s Roger Williams, honored the soldiers who died at the Battle of Princeton and the 24 unknown British and American soldiers memorialized at the adjacent Memorial Grove. Over 100 spectators participated, including reenactors, officers and members of the New Jersey Society Sons of the Revolution, the Daughters of the American Revolution, the New Jersey Sons of the American Revolution, the

Society of the Cincinnati, SAR Color Guard units from New Jersey, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, New England and Pennsylvania, local dignitaries, and military units with lineage to the Battle of Princeton, including:

- ★ **2nd Battalion Royal Anglian Regiment B Leicester Company** (Rutland, England), representing the 17th Regiment of Foot,
- ★ **1st Infantry Division, 1st Battalion, 5th Field Artillery** (Fort Reilly, Kansas), representing the New York Provincial Company of Artillery (aka “Alexander Hamilton’s Own”),
- ★ **Pennsylvania Army National Guard, 1st Division**, representing the Philadelphia Associators, 111th Infantry Battalion,
- ★ **Pennsylvania Army National Guard**, representing the Philadelphia Artillery Battalion, 103 Engineer Battalion (aka “The Dandy First”),
- ★ **Delaware Army National Guard**, representing Haslet’s 1st Delaware Regiment, the 198th Signal Battalion,
- ★ **New Jersey National Guard**, representing Neil’s Battery, East New Jersey Artillery, the 112th Field Artillery Battalion.



Experience the Battle of Princeton was funded with support from The George H. and Estelle M. Sands Foundation, New Jersey Historic Trust (Discover New Jersey License Plate Fund for Heritage Tourism), Janssen Pharmaceuticals, NJM Insurance Group, Mercer County Cultural & Heritage Commission, a gift in honor of Colonel Timothy Matlack (Philadelphia's 5th Regiment of Rifles), New Jersey Society of the Sons of the American Revolution, Allen & Stults Co., Tom Kane, Princeton-Mercer Convention & Visitors Bureau, and Princeton Battlefield Society members and donors. Thanks as well to Raoul Momo and the 25 PBS volunteers.

Photo credits: Al Pohek and Meredith Barnes / Molly Picture Studio



★★★ ROGER S. WILLIAMS TO RECEIVE 2022 MERCER OAK AWARD ★★★

"The Mercer Oak Award represents a love for American history and especially the Battle of Princeton and our War for Independence," explained Michael Russell, president of the Princeton Battlefield Society. "This year's recipient is an outstanding public historian and an enthusiastic historical interpreter dedicated to telling the Battle of Princeton's human and military story." With these words he announced the 2022 Mercer Oak Award recipient, Roger S. Williams.

Williams will receive his award at a June 16 reception at The Nassau Inn.

"Roger has been a dedicated friend of the battlefield and a long-time interpreter of American history. He eagerly shares his love for this historic location and its significance to the American Revolution," stated Russell. "Roger's sense of history and his vivid interpretation of this national event and the Ten Crucial Days of 1776-77, bring a greater awareness to life for visitors as they walk through and tour Princeton's landmark park."

"Growing up in Princeton, I can remember my Father bringing me to the battlefield," Williams recalled. "I have fond memories of walking where history happened. I've always felt a sense of witness to the events and experiences of people and what happened on this field on January 3, 1777. It is an honor to share their stories."

This dedication to the battlefield and the Battle of Princeton have been hallmarks during Williams' career as a book publishing professional. He served as a trustee of the Princeton Battlefield Society and developed its current logo, re-developed its website, developed the Battlefield Tour Program, and contributed to the creation of new educational materials. He continues to serve as an Historical Battlefield Interpreter and tour guide. As



Always committed to telling the Battle of Princeton story.

State Historian for the New Jersey Society, Sons of the American Revolution, Williams recently chaired the wreath laying ceremony at the Colonnade during the Princeton Battlefield Society's Experience the Battle of Princeton. The ceremony brought together color guard units from hereditary societies from various states and representatives of military units with heritage lines back to the Battle of Princeton, including a British Army officer representing the 17th Regiment of Foot which fought here.

In addition to his years of service to the Princeton Battlefield, Williams is the co-founder of TenCrucialDays.org, an organized affiliation of organizations committed to the promotion of ten days in 1776-77, from Washington's crossing of the Delaware to his victory at Princeton, that "turned the tide of American fortunes toward independence." He also developed the tour program for the Washington Crossing Historic Park,

published local historic authors, Larry Kidder, Jerry Hurwitz, and David Price, and created the successful online program, HistoryAuthorsTalk.org, which brings American Revolution historians to national prominence. He serves as president of the Princeton chapter of the Sons of the American Revolution and is active on several national SAR committees. "In his spare time," Russell noted, "he serves on the Spirit of Princeton Committee, is a member of numerous historic, academic, and preservation organizations, and is executive producer of a musical, currently in development, about Washington's Crossing and the Ten Crucial Days."

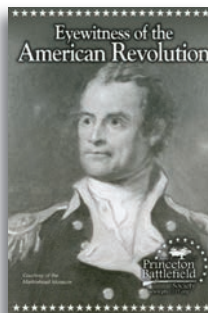
Past recipients of the Mercer Oak Award are Jerry Hurwitz, Raoul Momo, Peter J. Travers, and Mark & Rachel Herr.

Information on the 2022 Mercer Oak Award Reception will be available on the Princeton Battlefield Society's website, www.pbs1777.org.

★★★★★ UPDATES ★★★★★

TEN NEW EYEWITNESS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION CARDS RELEASED

With grant support from the Mercer County Cultural & Heritage Commission, ten new eyewitness cards, representing each of the ten crucial days of 1776-77, are now available, bringing the number of cards to 28. The narratives for all cards were written by historian and author, Larry Kidder.



The new "eyewitnesses" are Colonel John Glover (14th Continental Regiment – Marbleheaders), Sergeant Joseph White (2nd Company, Pennsylvania State Artillery), Martha Reed (A young resident of Trenton), Lieutenant Jacob Piel (Fusillier Regiment von Lossberg),

Private David How (16th Continental Regiment), Colonel Joseph Reed (Adjutant General), Private Jacob Gullick, ne Francis (16th Continental Regiment), Anna Richmond (Richmond's Tavern on Mill Hill, Trenton), Colonel Edward Hand (1st Pennsylvania Rifle Regiment), and General George Washington (Commander-in-Chief, Continental Army).

Copies of all Eyewitness cards are available at no cost to teachers/educators and students. They are distributed nationally.



KENNETH GAVIN ELECTED NEW TRUSTEE

Kenneth Gavin was elected as a new Class of 2025 trustee at the board's January meeting. Ken is the Communications Director of the Philadelphia Archdiocese and is active in the reenactor community. Ken also portrayed "Captain Joseph Moulder" in the new video of our Eyewitness cards. Welcome, Ken!

MARK YOUR CALENDAR TODAY AND JOIN US AT UPCOMING SPRING EVENTS

Take out your 2022 calendar now and mark the following dates:

- ★ **Spring Clean Up Day** – April 9: Help us spruce up the Battlefield after a long winter.
- ★ **Memorial Day** – May 29: "Tie a Yellow Ribbon" on our memorial wreath.
- ★ **Battlefield Tour Program** begins on May 15.
- ★ **Mercer Oak Award Reception** on June 16 at The Nassau Inn, honoring Roger Williams
- ★ **July 4** – Celebrate Independence Day with us

We look forward to welcoming your participation.

MERCER COUNTY CULTURAL & HERITAGE COMMISSION SUPPORTS PBS

PBS has once again received a General Operating Support grant from the Mercer County Cultural & Heritage Commission to assist with management and program initiatives. The grant will provide funds, for example, for the reprinting of our "Battle of Princeton" brochure and other educational materials. Funds are also available for program assistance with events and programs through the year and to support community outreach activities.

If you are interested in our internship program, or know of someone who may have an interest, please contact Bill Marsch at wrmarsch@gmail.com.

JOIN US AS A 2022 MEMBER

If you have not received your membership invitation please let us know and we will send the invitation and return envelope to you. If you have, and have not responded, please do so today. You can also become a Member on our website, www.pbs1777.org. We need your help in 2022 as we celebrate the 250th Anniversary of the Thomas Clarke House and expand our American Revolution education programs and initiatives.



BOOK RECOMMENDATION

The Heritage Trail Association of New Jersey (Editors Linda Barth, Sean Blinn, and Margaret W. Sullivan) published *The Continental Army Comes into Its Own: The Middlebrook Cantonment of 1778-1779*. This new work includes articles presented at a 2019 symposium about New



Jersey's central role in the American Revolution. The work presents original research and previously unreleased findings about George Washington's strategic positioning of the army in the Raritan Valley during the winter of 1778-1779. By spending that winter training and concentrating on resupply, the period marks the point when the Continental Army "became a professional fighting force" and became one of organization, consolidation, and with a sense of order, all critical to the American victory.

The book is available wherever books are sold or on Amazon at <https://www.amazon.com/Continental-Army-Comes-into-Its/dp/B09HQ25ZB3/> in both paperback and digital editions.

EYEWITNESSES OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION VIDEO

With a grant from the New Jersey Historical Commission, six "eyewitnesses" from the Society's Eyewitness of the American Revolution cards were selected for videotaping and virtual programming. The first-person narratives for Sergeant Nathaniel Root (20th Continental Regiment), Susannah (Enslaved Woman of the Clarke Family), Captain William Leslie (17th Regiment of Foot), Ann Clarke (Wife of William Clarke), Captain Joseph Moulder (Philadelphia Associator Artillery), and Dr. Benjamin Rush (Continental Army Medical Officer) were videotaped at locations at the Battlefield, each portrayed by an amateur actor in appropriate costume. The final video will be available on the Society's website, www.pbs1777.org, and through

social media. The project received hands-on professional assistance from Paul Kelley, Production Director, Matt Matrale, Videographer and Editor, and Will Krakower, the Park's Historical Interpreter.

WREATHS ACROSS AMERICA

On December 18 a Wreaths Across America commemoration ceremony was held at the Colonnade, co-sponsored by the Princeton Battlefield Society, Sons of the American Revolution, Daughters of the American Revolution, and New Jersey Freemasons of Mercer Lodge No. 50, Princeton Lodge No. 38, and District No. 15. The program included Princeton University ROTC, 1st Rhode Island Regiment (Trenton), and the Marine Corps League, Trenton Detachment 207. Michael Russell, president, presided over the ceremony. The Marine Corps League trooped the colors. Rev. John H. Harris, Jr. offered the invocation and benediction. Park Historical Educator, Will Krakower, related the significance of the Battle of Princeton and the "meaning of this place". The 1st Rhode Island Regiment and other re-enactors fired tribute volleys and NJ Grand Lodge Grand Soloist, Ray Foose, sang the tribute hymn.



★ Thomas Clarke House ★
250th 1772-2022 Anniversary

2022 is the 250th Anniversary of the historic Thomas Clarke House.

We invite you to join us in celebration!



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