



The Link

joining the sites along the rivers

Volume 10 , Issue 4

The Raritan-Millstone Heritage Alliance

Spring 2009

SUNDAY SERIES LUNCHEON/LECTURE

James T. Raleigh, President of the Friends of the Monmouth Battlefield Association, will explore "**GEORGE WASHINGTON and the LONGEST DAY of the AMERICAN REVOLUTIONARY WAR**"

Sunday, May 17, 2009 from 1:30-3:00 PM

at historic Cranbury Inn,

21 South Main Street, Cranbury, NJ.

Reservations are required. The inclusive luncheon/lecture cost is \$30.00 per person. To reserve call Elyce Jennings before May 10 at 732-463-0767 and mail your check payable to

RMHA % Mrs. Elyce M. Jennings, 85 River Road
Piscataway, NJ 08854.



The Battle Of Monmouth *by Donald Johnstone Peck*

Come with me for a drive on historic roads through portions of Middlesex, Somerset, Hunterdon, and Monmouth counties and along roads traversing the Raritan and Millstone River valleys and their tributaries.

One of my favorite roads is old Route 514. When in 1655 Governor Petrus Stuyvesant made all of future New Jersey part of Nieuw Netherland, the Dutch laid out this first road through New Jersey. Roughly paralleling one of the major Lenni Lenape Indian trails, it began at Nieuw Amsterdam. From there it crossed the bay by ferry to a point near Elizabeth, and traversed the areas that would become Main Street in Woodbridge and Woodbridge Avenue in Piscata-

way (present day Edison) to the ford at the Raritan River that became Inian's Ferry in 1681.

Later in 1724, Inian's Ferry was named New Brunswick in honor of the ascension of the House of Brunswick (a German duchy of the House of Hanover) to the throne of Great Britain in the person of King George I. From there present day Route 514 becomes Amwell Road in Franklin Township, (a name it has proudly borne for more than 200 years in honor of the last Royal Governor of New Jersey.)

Driving along Amwell Road from New Brunswick to East Millstone, we pass by the old Franklin Inn, circa 1752, the home of Cornelius and Anje Van



Franklin Inn, circa 1752

Liew, and where General Lord Charles Cornwallis is said to have stayed during the Second Middlebush Encampment, 1778-79.

The adjacent Six Mile Run Historic District on South Middlebush Road, Franklin Township encompasses exceptionally well-preserved vistas of a Dutch-settled rural nineteenth century landscape that once characterized the Raritan Valley. Contributing structures include numerous farm-

THIRTEENTH ANNUAL MEETING
Raritan-Millstone Heritage Alliance, Inc.

(Alliance Sites are encouraged to send their Representative)

APRIL 16, 2009
1:30-3:00 PM

RARITAN YACHT CLUB
160 Water Street
Perth Amboy, New Jersey

LUNCHEON
(Choice of five entrees, salad and dessert)

\$30.00 per person

ELECTION of the BOARD OF DIRECTORS

DISTINGUISHED SPEAKER
Cathleen R. Litvack,

Executive Director

**CROSSROADS of the
AMERICAN REVOLUTION**

2009 LEADERSHIP IN HISTORY AWARD
Presented to
Congressman Rush D. Holt

To reserve please mail your check in advance before April 9, payable to RMHA and mail it to Mrs. Elyce M. Jennings, 851 River Road, Piscataway, NJ 08854 (phone 732-463-0767)



The Raritan Yacht Club

Established in 1865, RYC is one of the oldest yacht clubs in America. The present house, grounds and dock were purchased in 1916 from the Cooper Estate. The club has had many champions in national sailing events and several champions in the international field. In 2006 the sailing vessel "Sinn Fein," owned and captained by RYC member Pete Rebovich, Sr. won the 100th Anniversary Newport-Bermuda Race. Anchorage extends from the restored Perth Amboy-Tottenville, SI Ferry Slip Museum at the front of Smith Street to the South Amboy railroad bridge. It is dotted with over 250 yachts.

Raritan-Millstone Heritage Alliance

P. O. Box 5583
Somerset, N.J. 08875-5583

*An organization of individuals,
organizations and sites
working to promote preservation and understanding of
the rich eventful and cultural heritage
of significant historical, educational and cultural sites
located in Central New Jersey*

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YOUR LINK TO THE PUBLIC: The Link is on a quarterly publication schedule. News of major upcoming events for possible placement in the newsletter may be mailed, emailed or faxed to the following address. Any questions, please contact: Donald J. Peck, Editor, The Clausen Company, P.O.Box 140, Fords, NJ 088 63 or phone 732-738-1165, fax 732-738-1618, or E-mail clausenco@aol.com.

steads, Dutch and English barns, smoke houses, corncribs, granaries and many other outbuildings.

Crossing the Delaware & Raritan Canal, completed in 1834, we see one of America's greatest inland waterways. Dug in the valleys of the three rivers it connects – the Raritan, the Millstone, and the Delaware, it was an engineering marvel running south through central New Jersey to New Brunswick where it empties into the Raritan River. During its peak years of 1866-1871, it carried more freight than any other canal in America. Closed in 1933, it became a state park in 1974.

Crossing the 44-mile long Delaware and Raritan Canal and the 38-mile long Millstone River, we continue west to where Amwell Road terminates at Ringoes. We then follow Route 179 south to Lambertville (Old Coryell's Ferry). It was from here that Commander-in-Chief General George Washington and his troops entered New Jersey on June 20, 1778, after having left their encampment at Valley Forge in Pennsylvania. Driving east from Lambertville on Route 518, we then follow the same route Washington and his Continental Army took for their rendezvous with the British Army at Monmouth Court House (present day Freehold, New Jersey).

Our first stop is at Hopewell Boro, where on June 23, 1778, the Continental Army camped on the farm

of John Hart, one of New Jersey's five signers of the Declaration of Independence. At nearby Hunt House, erected in 1752 of stone and timber, the farmstead of the Joseph Stouts (descendants of Penelope Van Princis Stout who was shipwrecked on Sandy Hook, New Jersey in 1620), in the shadow of the red shale Sourland Mountain, Washington held his celebrated council of war. It proposed the action that resulted in the Battle of Monmouth, with the greatest single assemblage of American officers.

At Hopewell Washington ordered an advance guard of four thousand men under Major General Marie-Joseph Lafayette to proceed eight miles to the east of Kingston, in present day Monroe Township, to place these troops directly across Sir Henry Clinton's route to New Brunswick and Perth Amboy should Clinton proceed in a northerly direction.



Major General Charles Lee, second in command, "who preferred to let the British force parade unmolested across the State," looked that day

"anxious and indignant that his military experience and judgment" had not persuaded his associates Washington, Greene, Hamilton, Stirling, Lafayette, Steuben, Knox, Poor, Wayne, Woodford, Patterson, Scott, Scammel, and Duportail.

That anxious look is well graven in one of the bas-reliefs of the Battle of Monmouth Monument at Freehold that depicts the outstanding leaders of the Revolution around the council of war table at Hopewell during a solar eclipse, June 24, 1778. General Washington is listening attentively while Lafayette urges immediate action, with Steuben and Duportail in agreement. Patterson and Greene would force an engagement too. Colonel Scammel, Adjutant-General, who was to die at Yorktown, is shown busily engaged recording the opinions of the experts and hoping that General Wayne, who wants to say something equally forceful, will wait until Lafayette is finished. Only Lee is sitting back, scoffing, and grumbling under his breath. And so it was here that the decision was made not to mount a serious attack on the twelve-mile-long British baggage train, but to attack only the rear guard and grab a part of it.

General Sir William Howe's forces had invaded the "rebel capital" of Philadelphia on September 26, 1777, via the Chesapeake Bay, after successfully engaging the

