

# Brandywine Dispatch

SUMMER 2025



## LIBERTY TREE

America250PA, in Partnership with the Pennsylvania Freemasons, is planting a certified Liberty Tree in each of Pennsylvania's 67 counties. We are pleased to announce that Brandywine Battlefield Park has been chosen as the site of Delaware County's Liberty Tree. Event is free.

Gilpin House at Brandywine Battlefield Park

Tuesday, June 3, 2025

11:30 a.m.



## BREWS AT THE BATTLEFIELD

**Tap into the Past!** Brews at the Battlefield is returning to the Park! We can sample a wide selection of craft beers from local breweries, eat great food, and listen to awesome live music. The lively atmosphere lets us mingle with fellow beer enthusiasts and speak with the passionate brewers behind these exceptional beverages. We can learn about the brewing process, discover unique flavors, and gain insights into the world of craft beer.

Our iconic location holds significant historical importance, making it the perfect backdrop for an evening of great beer and good company. This is a 21+ only event.

Brandywine Battlefield Park

Saturday, June 14, 2025

5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Ticket information:



[Events – Brandywine Battlefield Park Associates](#)

## BRANDYWINE BATTLEFIELD SUMMER CAMP

This year's summer camp will feature a number of new activities as well as many old favorites during the four week camp sessions. Amongst the new additions will be a new program involving setting up an encampment and shelters like those the Revolutionary and British forces would have made. Campers will also experiment with making hard bread – more commonly known as hard tack. Staff have incorporated a number of new games – many related to actual colonial games played during the period. As in previous years, campers will benefit from the profound knowledge of our volunteers. At the end of the week campers and parents will enjoy the traditional bubbles and squeak to round out the experience.



Week 1: July 1-4, Brave the Battle Week, grades 3-5

Week 2: July 8-11, Step into the Past Week, grades 3-5

Week 3: FULL. Please see Week 1 if you are interested in Brave the Battle Week

Week 4: July 29-August 1, Step into the Past Week, grades 3-5

[Summer History Camp – Brandywine Battlefield Park Associates](#)

*The Brandywine Dispatch is the newsletter for the Brandywine Battlefield Park and published by the Brandywine Battlefield Park Associates. "Keeping the Story Alive and Interesting!"*

## ***THE LIBERTY TREE: A LIVING SYMBOL OF AMERICAN FREEDOM***

In the early days of America's resistance to British rule, before muskets fired or declarations were signed, colonists rallied beneath the branches of what became known as the Liberty Tree. These trees were often towering elms or sturdy oaks. The trees served as grassroots symbols of freedom, unity, and protest. The most famous of these stood in Boston, where in 1765, American colonists gathered under its branches to denounce the Stamp Act. It became the first rallying point for the Sons of Liberty, and soon, Liberty Trees sprouted in towns across the colonies, uniting patriots in the common cause of independence.



The Liberty Tree was more than a simple landmark. The tree was a symbol of natural law, civic unity, and collective strength. Effigies of British officials were hung from its limbs, public speeches were delivered in its shade, and the spirit of resistance found fertile ground in its roots. When British soldiers cut down Boston's Liberty Tree in 1775, hoping to crush colonial morale, they only reinforced its power. It became a martyr of the Revolution, its symbolism living on long after its branches were felled.

Today, more than two centuries later, the Liberty Tree remains a powerful emblem. As America approaches its 250th anniversary in 2026, efforts are underway to revive this meaningful symbol for a new generation. In Pennsylvania, a joint initiative between the Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania and America250 is doing just that; by planting new Liberty Trees throughout the Commonwealth at historic sites and civic landmarks. Seedlings from the last remaining tree in Annapolis, Maryland, have produced hundreds of descendants that will be planted throughout Pennsylvania over the next several years.

This partnership seeks not only to honor the past, but also to inspire the future. Each tree planting is a ceremonial reminder that liberty, like a tree, requires deep roots, steady growth, and constant care. These events bring together communities, schools, civic leaders, and Masons to celebrate the enduring values that have shaped our nation: freedom, unity, and service.

One of the most significant of these events will take place on June 3rd at 11:30 a.m. at the Brandywine Battlefield Park in Chadds Ford, Pennsylvania. This historic site was the location of the largest land battle of the American Revolution, where American and British forces clashed in 1777. Although the battle was a tactical loss for the Americans, it was a turning point in the struggle for independence and a symbol of enduring resistance.

At this special ceremony, a new Liberty Tree will be planted, continuing the legacy of the original trees and paying tribute to those who fought for the freedoms we enjoy today. The Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania, with its deep historical ties to the Founding Fathers—many of whom were Masons—will lead the event alongside America250 representatives. Together, they invite the public to witness and participate in this celebration of remembrance, renewal, and hope.

The Liberty Tree may have first taken root in 1765, but its message is timeless: liberty must be nurtured and protected by each generation. As new trees are planted, so too is our commitment to the ideals that define the American spirit.



Eric Downs, Vice President, Brandywine Battlefield Park Associates

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***Submissions are Welcome!***

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## *The President's View*

Greetings from Brandywine Battlefield Park!

It's hard to believe that we are on the brink of summer already. Since our re-opening for the 2025 season on March 9, things have been busy at the Park—the biggest thing being the renovations at the Visitor Center. Troy Grubb, the park's site administrator, covers all this in his section, *The Field Report*, but you will be delighted to see the results of all the work that is taking place.

Having spent a lot of time at the Park, I was pleasantly surprised to find the building's exterior almost unrecognizable as I pulled in during my last visit, and it's even more impressive on the inside!



Not only have things been busy with renovations, but the Park staff and volunteers have also been going full steam ahead with programming. By the official start of summer, they will have provided educational programming for nearly twenty schools, consisting of public, private, and home school students. The programming doesn't stop with our busy spring school season though, as we're also gearing up for our annual summer camp sessions. This year, we are excited to host another round of exciting sessions that include Brave the Battle Week, which allows campers to participate in exciting hands-on activities focusing on the military side of the Revolution, and Step into the Past Week, which allows campers to explore historical trades with a hands-on approach and learn how they influenced modern careers and industries.

We are also looking forward to one of our more popular programs this summer: Brews at the Battlefield! Don't forget to purchase your tickets and join us on Saturday, June 14 at 5 p.m. for this unique brew fest experience. This year we will welcome another cadre of breweries and cideries from the region to our historic Gideon Gilpin homestead, where guests will be able to sample a little bit of everything while enjoying live music, food, and a historic ambience. We'll even have commemorative t-shirts for sale this year, so purchase your tickets now because we are going to sell out. It's a great way to support the educational mission of the BBPA!

All this is just scratching the surface of what has been going on at the Park recently, and I'm proud to say there are plenty more exciting things to come! I hope you will visit the park soon to experience it all for yourself. Be sure to check our website for more information on future events and follow us on social media if you don't already. As always, on behalf of the entire BBPA board of directors, thank you for your continued support of our mission. We look forward to seeing you at the Park soon!

All the best,  
Andrew Outten

### ***OUR MISSION***

*"To preserve, interpret and share the impact of the enduring story of the Battle of the Brandywine, the largest and longest single day land battle of the American Revolution."*

## The Field Report



In the last issue of the Dispatch, I detailed our Visitor Center renovation and the goals of the project. This issue will provide an update.

Quite a bit has taken place since I last communicated with you. We've gotten closer to finishing the front canopy with the installation of a new standing seam roof



and a new front entrance door. Additionally, tiling in the restrooms has been completed.

Next is the installation of the new restroom fixtures and the connection of mechanical and electrical lines. Once completed with these items, other punch list items such as touchup paint and flooring tile replacement will take place.



While this has taken considerable time, perhaps, more time than anyone expected, it has been well worth the wait. Visitors will see and experience a more inviting Visitor Center as well as one that functions much better.



## History Challenge

### Definitions:

**Freak:** (n) A whim, a capricious prank, a sudden turn. From the Old English *freak* meaning "quick". On March 16, 1770, John Rowe recorded in his diary, "Mr. {Samuel} Otis got into a mad freak tonight and broke a great many windows in the Town house."

**Groat:** (n) An English silver coin worth about four pence. From *great*, because before this coin there was no silver coin larger than a penny. In 1748, Franklin observed, "six pounds a year is but a groat a day."



**Mathematician:** (n) An astrologer. In 1722 William Byrd wrote: "That indeed he was rightly served for committing his affairs to the care of a mathematician whose thoughts were always among the stars."

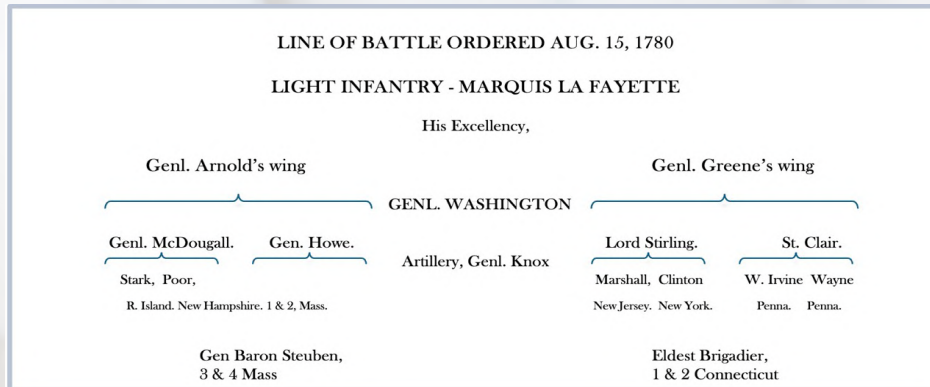
**Rug:** (n) A covering for a bed. Floor coverings were carpets. In 1685, a Connecticut will bequeathed a rug "to my "Cousen" Martha Henderson...."

## LAFAYETTE "DRESSES UP" THE AMERICAN LIGHT INFANTRY

Washington's Orderly Books Camp Totowa, November 15, 1780: "It has a very odd appearance, especially to foreigners, to see the same corps of officers each differing from the other in the fashion of the facings, sleeves and pockets of their coats. An attention to these minutiae has been thought necessary and proper in all services; it becomes peculiarly so in ours at this time, as we shall, more than probably, take the field next campaign, in conjunction with our Allies, composed of the first troops in Europe, who will receive impressions and form opinions from the first view." French troops joined the American forces in New York and in Virginia the following year.

In 1780, General Washington issued an order of battle for the corps of light infantry, and on August 8th, General Lafayette took command.

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In his *Diary of Events in the War of the Revolution*, Capt. Joseph McClellan chronicles his experiences during the New Jersey encampment of the light infantry in the summer and autumn of 1780. He notes dining with Lafayette and others, ongoing inspections by Generals Hand, Lafayette, von Steuben, and Washington, and a series of gifts presented to the light infantry troops by "the Marquis De La Fayette."

"August 14th. A company of each regiment of the Infantry marched to Marquis De La Fayette's Quarters, and received each an elegant standard."

"August 22d. Each officer in the corps of the Light Infantry received an elegant feather, cockade, and epaulets. Each non-commissioned officer received an elegant sword, feather, two bobs, and as much silver lace as would lace the front of their caps."

"Sept. 19th. Each officer in the Light Infantry received an elegant small sword, as a present from the Marquis De La Fayette."

"Sept. 29th. Received the clothing, procured by the Marquis De La Fayette for the officers of his division. Received four sword belts from the Marquis as a present."

When forming the Chester County Chapter of the DAR in 1894, Chester County Native, Malinda Worthington Hoopes, remarked that the heirlooms received from General Lafayette remain in the possession of her great-grandfather, Captain McClellan's descendants. (DAR Nat'l. No. 3623)

-Kris Barone