



The Brandywine Dispatch



SPRING 2024

SPRINGTIME AT THE BATTLEFIELD

Celebrate Pennsylvania's 343rd Birthday!

Sunday, March 10, 2024
12:00p.m. to 3:00p.m.

Please join us for Charter Day, our annual season opener! Have fun learning about William Penn's Charter for Pennsylvania with historical interpreters, demonstrations, and more! Everyone is welcome and this event is FREE!

Revolutionary Speaker Series *The People Called Quakers: The Society of Friends and the American Revolution*

Saturday, March 16, 2024
12:00p.m.-1:30p.m.

Katy Telling, presenter, shares Quaker perspectives during the 1770s-1790s. Their religious beliefs and ambivalence created a complicated relationship with the American Revolution. Katy explores the diverse array of political options and degree of engagement among the Quakers.

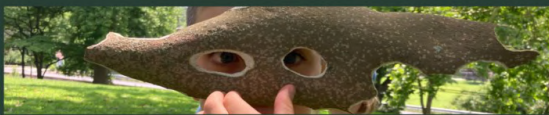
brandywine-battlefield-park.ticketleap.com/revolutionary-speaker-series-katytelling/.

PRESERVING OUR PAST AT BRANDYWINE BATTLEFIELD PARK



April 27th
10am-3pm

Learn about the Brandywine Battlefield Park's efforts to preserve our rich heritage and meet with various demonstrators and vendors.



WWW.BRANDYWINEBATTLEFIELD.ORG

Brandywine Battlefield Park
Presents:

BREWS AT THE BATTLEFIELD

SATURDAY, JUNE 15, 2024, FROM 5-8 P.M.

21+ ONLY EVENT

BREWERIES:

Braeloch Brewing
Wilmington Brew Works
Fat Lady Brewing
Victory Brewing Co. Kennett Square
Old Stone Cider
Bellefonte Brewing Company
Lost Planet Brewing Company
Rebel Seed Cider
Conshohocken Brewing Co.
Blondes and Brewnettes Brewing Co.

FOOD TRUCKS:

Burgers by Wildwich
Calaveras Street Tacos

MUSIC:

Sin Brothers Band

ADDRESS:

1491 Baltimore Pike,
Chadds Ford, PA

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!"

Caring for a Young Nation at War: Women in the American Revolution

Brandywine Battlefield Park remembers the sacrifice and perseverance of both soldiers and civilians during the Revolutionary War. The role of women in the Revolution is often diminished, even though women served as the caretakers and sustainers of the young, bleeding nation as the war raged on. From boycotting highly taxed food items to mourning fallen children, it was clear that women played an influential role in the Revolution.

Most women stayed home to continue raising the family, overseeing the property, and working the farm to provide much needed food and clothing to the military. The sound of slowly approaching cannon fire brought anxiety over the safety of those at home as well as the fate of their loved ones in battle. Anne Eliza Bleecker, one of the few published women authors from the period, wrote honestly about the tremendous pain of losing her infant to a fever far from home after fleeing from encroaching British troops. When the war appeared bleak, correspondence with surviving family and fellow women about their common grief and hope in the cause brought some comfort.



Some women instead accompanied their enlisted husbands or brothers, serving as camp followers. Called “retainers to the camp,” the followers were legally a part of the military and provided family and others the crucial services of cooking, washing clothes, and tending to the wounded, all while living a rugged life similar to the soldiers. Most of the camp followers were lower class women and children financially dependent upon enlisted family members, thus dependent on the Continental military. Though there are reports that these women were considered a burden and embarrassment early in the war, after the winter at Valley Forge the women

were given specific duties that brought them greater purpose, respect, and provisions from the army. Since food and supplies were scarce and disease and injury rampant, following the camp was a way for women to provide enlisted family and accompanying children with much needed care. Though very few of these women faced combat, the camp followers were accepting a great risk and responsibility by being near battle and taking on the important work of caring for the troops.

Both the presence of wives at camp and the letters of women at home inspired the soldiers to fight for the freedom to live happy lives at home with those they loved. Whether following battle or hoping to avoid it, the women of the American Revolution feared and endured violence, illness, economic stress, theft, displacement, and grief. Nevertheless, they served courageously. -

—Melody Schwartz

Education Program Coordinator

Brandywine Battlefield Park Associates



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Submissions are Welcome!

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The President's View

Greetings fellow *Dispatch* readers,

My name is Alexis Furlong, and I am the new Brandywine Battlefield Park Associates president. As per tradition, I will share a note with you all every quarter about the programs, people, and volunteers that make the Brandywine Battlefield Park a truly unique place.



But first, I'd like to introduce myself!

A lifelong Delaware County resident (not counting a stint in Washington, D.C., to attend school at the Catholic University of America), I currently serve as the Director of Strategic Communications at the Independence Seaport Museum in Philadelphia. Coming from a long line of history enthusiasts, it is no wonder I entered the field that I did, although I will say the fire was stoked even more so during my eighth-grade American history class at Garnet Valley Middle School. As one says, I was hooked and never looked back. How hooked, you ask? Well, my aunt and I have set a goal to visit every presidential homestead and library in the country (word to the wise: visit Montpelier; there's nothing like the Blue Ridge Mountains rising to meet you).

History, particularly American history, has a way of awakening our curiosity at the deepest level, whether you are a reader, watcher, visitor, or anywhere in between. For a country that is still relatively young, it's a major accomplishment! For a country that is still relatively young, it's a major accomplishment! That's what I look forward to the most about being involved in the park. We get to instill that same feeling whenever we host a school group or a speaker series. The story of what happened on September 11, 1777, is one that we need to continue to tell. And as we tell it, I can't wait to see how it inspires the next generation.

Until next time,

Alexis Furlong

President, Brandywine Battlefield Park Associates

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."

We Remember Frank Murphy



Our community lost a respected friend and dedicated supporter with the passing of Frank G. Murphy, Esq. (1962-2024.) Frank was an enthusiastic member of the Brandywine Battlefield Park Associates Board of Directors and served a term as Board President. His guidance provided our organization with the ability to thrive and grow.

Frank's community service was extensive. He served on the Unionville-Chadds Ford School Board before being elected as the Chair for the Chadds Ford Board of Supervisors. He has served as an Assistant Solicitor for Delaware County Pennsylvania, Solicitor for the City of Chester Parking Authority, and outside counsel for the City of Chester and several other municipalities.

Frank will be remembered by his friends and colleagues as a dedicated public servant. He will be remembered by his wife, Anna-Marie, and daughters, Natalie and Julianna, as the greatest dad and husband they could have wanted.

"Frank was a natural leader in Chadds Ford for many years." -Samantha Reiner

"Frank was never looking for recognition or praise. He always stayed true to his values."-Noelle Barbone

"It was a privilege to work with Frank during my years as township manager. He was always the voice of reason in the room and had an uncanny ability to see all sides of an issue. I know he was very proud of the strides the township made in preserving open space."-Maryann Furlong

History Challenge

Did you know????

How many of us, when experiencing a house tour at a historical site, hear of situations or customs that just sound a bit ludicrous to say the least? Well, it seems many sites continued repeat many of the "myths" that were perpetrated during the Colonial Revival period and even later when investigative tools of research just weren't available. Here are some such "myths" or misrepresentations:

"Keeping room" – This was erroneously labeled as the kitchen but this was never a term used in contemporary times. The *Oxford English Dictionary* gives the late date of 1790 for the earliest recorded usage of "keeping room" as "the room usually occupied by a person or family as a sitting room; a parlour".

"Hiding places" – Most old houses contain a small space under a staircase, or a narrow space next to a chimney. It's not uncommon for someone investigating an old house to find such places. Contrary to popular myth, they didn't allow for hiding from Indian attacks, or the Underground railroad, or even valuables. It was more likely just a root cellar, or a place to store items.

"Christian symbolism in doors and hardware"- Many times you'll hear of the "HL" hinges standing in for "Holy Lord" or the six panel doors as showing the cross or even the open pages of the Bible. Both of these are myths that became popular in the late 18th and early 19th centuries. Many hinges were simply used for the purpose such as the HL hinge to hold a heavier interior door or the H hinge for a cupboard. The four, or six raised panel door simply by it's design showed a homeowner status as a more prosperous individual who could afford such an elaborate design.

Source: *Early American Life*, February 2007; Ellen E. Wilson & Paul Santagata.



The Field Report

We've all heard or seen the claims that "Washington Slept Here." While many of these claims can be corroborated with primary source documentation, others are just legends that have been passed down through the generations. Why do we hold on to these myths despite a lack of proof? I believe it's because we want to make the connection to prominent historical figures like Washington, especially if it involves a visit by that figure to our hometown or even our own home. At Brandywine Battlefield Park, we have evidence that Washington stayed overnight here not in one of our houses, but outside in his campaign tent. What has really struck me are the claims made in the decades following the battle that Lafayette slept at or had his headquarters here at the Gideon Gilpin House.

Most of us are familiar with the story of the Marquis de Lafayette, the 19-year-old aristocrat who sailed from France to join Washington's army and fight for our independence. Commissioned a major general, Lafayette joined Washington and his army shortly before the Battle of Brandywine. While his rank would've entitled him to his own command and likely a headquarters, he instead served on Washington's staff as an aide. When Washington arrived in Chadds Ford on September 9, 1777, Lafayette accompanied him to the Ring House, where Washington established his headquarters. On the day of the battle, September 11, Lafayette entrenched himself as an American hero, after he was wounded attempting to rally the retreating American troops. Lafayette would eventually recover and return in 1780 to Chadds Ford to visit Benjamin Ring, "at whose house he lodged with General Washington the night before the battle," according to French officer Marquis de Castellux. He then rejoined Washington and bravely led American troops into battle including the final battle, at Yorktown. If it hadn't been for Lafayette, it's difficult to say whether the French would have joined the fight.



Photo provided by Laurie Bonner

Because of his contributions, he was hailed as a hero when he returned to America almost 50 years later in 1824. In towns and cities across the fledgling United States, throngs of people flocked to get a glimpse of one of the few remaining Revolutionary War heroes. When Lafayette arrived in Chadds Ford on July 26, 1825, he visited the home of Gideon Gilpin "under whose roof he had spent the night before the Battle, according to his secretary," Auguste Levasseur. While Lafayette may have known Gilpin from the time of the battle or his 1780 visit to the area, it's unlikely he stayed overnight or had his headquarters at the Gilpin Home despite Levasseur's account. As an aide to Washington, his place was near the General at the Ring House, which aligns with Castellux's statement.

Making that connection to historical figures gives us a sense of pride, especially for those of us who love history. While some of these may only be myths, everyone enjoys a good story. We just need to remember how we frame these claims, so they aren't presented as fact.

Troy Grubb

PHMC Site Administrator

Brandywine Battlefield Summer Camp

Brandywine Battlefield Summer Camp is returning for summer 2024! Campers entering grades 3-5 will learn about the Battle of Brandywine and life in the 18th century through hands-on activities, games, and visits from historical characters. To learn more and register, visit <https://www.brandywinebattlefield.org/summer-camp/>. We hope your camper will join us for the revolutionary fun!

Brave the Battle Week Do you wonder what it was like to live through the Revolutionary War, specifically the Battle of Brandywine? Now's your chance to learn how the battle really went not only for Washington and his troops, but also Quaker families, British soldiers, and everyone in between. Campers will be transported to the week of the Battle of Brandywine, learning firsthand how to march like a soldier, protect one's family, bring intelligence to Washington, and, of course, capture a flag. Step into the Past Week Find out what everyday life was like in 18th century Brandywine, complete with a colonial inspired party! This week of Brandywine Battlefield Summer Camp is designed to help campers discover how STEM and the arts are found in our local history through hands-on activities and games. Campers will become apprentices to the blacksmith, learn to paint history like Pyle, make their own paper, and have fun with many more surprises.



Camp Weeks:

June 25-28: Brave the Battle Week (for campers entering grades 3 and 4)

July 9-12: Step into the Past Week (for campers entering grades 3 and 4)

July 23-26: Brave the Battle Week (for campers entering grades 4 and 5)

July 30-Aug 2: Step into the Past Week (for campers entering grades 4 and 5)

Field Trips

We are very excited to welcome school groups again this spring!

Colonial Days are private field trips for large school groups. Students join historical interpreters in engaging activities relating to the American Revolution and colonial life.

Visit <https://www.brandywinebattlefield.org/school-tours/> and email bbpaeducationdirector@gmail.com to schedule a Colonial Day.

Discovery Days are field trip dates designed especially for homeschool co-ops and small school groups. The spring Discovery Day dates are April 10th, "STEM in History" and May 16th, "Who is an Artist?" To learn more and register for a Discovery Day, visit <https://www.brandywinebattlefield.org/school-tours/>

Please visit our website or contact us for more information about our Volunteer Program and becoming a Volunteer! Robin Baker, Volunteer Program Coordinator, bbpavolunteerdirector@gmail.com www.brandywinebattlefield.org

Check out our Americana Corner Preserving America Grant Profile video at <https://www.americanacorn.com/preserving-america/brandywine-battlefield-park-associates>

Brandywine Battlefield Park will open for the season on March 10, 2024!

Please visit us at [Brandywine Battlefield Park](https://www.brandywinebattlefield.org) for more information about our events, activities and programs!

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"The Brandywine Battlefield Park Associates is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization. The official registration and financial information of the Brandywine Battlefield Park Associates may be obtained from the Pennsylvania Department of State by calling toll free, in Pennsylvania, 1-800-732-0999. Registration does not imply endorsement"