**FRIENDS OF MONMOUTH BATTLEFIELD**

**MARCH 2025**

**NEXT REENACTMENT PLANNED FOR JUNE 28-29**

 Our commemoration of the 247th anniversary of the Battle of Monmouth will be celebrated with a reenactment on the weekend of June 28-29, 2025. It will not be held on Father’s Day weekend, as has been our custom the past few years, because of a conflicting event being held in Boston to commemorate the 250th anniversary of the battle of Bunker Hill.

 Two years ago, we ran a full-scale reenactment in honor of the 245th anniversary of the battle. It was our largest event in the past ten years, with about 800 reenactors and approximately 11,000 visitors.

 This year’s event will be on a smaller scale, the same size as last year, when we had about 200 reenactors participating. Besides the reenactment and soldier camps, there will be several talks and historical presentations both in the camps and the Visitor Center. We will also hold children’s infantry and cannon drills. In addition, Stacy Roth will be presenting her excellent first-person program on Molly Pitcher each day. We will post the full schedule of events and times in early June.

 This year we will not be having a special weekend of events in June, as we have been doing in the past, because of the event in Boston and the lateness of our reenactment. We have also been disappointed in the low visitation for our addition “commemoration” weekend the week after the reenactment.

However, additional events and tours will be held each weekend all month in June, followed by special presentations at the Park on July 4 (see enclosed calendar). All events are listed on our website: www.friendsofmonmouth.org.

 A special heads up that a huge reenactment is being planned to celebrate the 250th anniversary of the battle in June 2028. The tentative date is June 17-18, 2028. We will certainly keep you posted as plans develop.

 **SUCCESSFUL ANNUAL MEETING HELD IN DECEMBER**

Our annual meeting was held on December 14, 2024, in the meeting room at Monmouth Battlefield State Park. Ballots for the election of officers and for approval of our budget had been sent out by mail and were tallied at the meeting. A special mailing for approval of the annual plan for 2025 was sent out to be returned by the end of December.

Trustees whose terms expired this year were reelected (Andrew Beagle, David Martin, Marilyn Miller, David Shakespeare, and Peter Wagner). Three current officers were elected for another term: David Martin as President, Kathy Doherty as Treasurer, and Caralee Bava-Grygo as Secretary. John Resto was elected Vice President in place of George Dawson, who stepped down after many years of service. The budget offered for 2025 was approved at the meeting, and the annual plan for 2025 was approved by special mail in ballot at the end of the month.

Our thanks to those who attended the annual meeting, and our special thanks to all our volunteer officers and trustees.

**2025 MEMBERSHIP DRIVE CONTINUES**

Membership renewal forms for 2025 are enclosed. We really appreciate your support, especially those who make additional contributions beyond their dues. We are especially appreciative of our 40 life members. We cannot do all that we do without the support of our membership. Please include your email address on the form.

**CRAIG HOUSE NEWS**

 We are very pleased to report on the completion of a major stage of restoration work at the historic Craig House. These projects, all funded and carried out by the State, include: new roofing, new gutters, new siding, painting the exterior of the house, and installing new doors and windows.

The State is currently planning to upgrade the Craig House visitor parking lot. In addition, the State is also getting ready to create a new brochure on the Craig House in the same format as their brochure for the Park itself.

All this work supplements the several projects carried out by the Friends of Monmouth Battlefield in 2015-2024, when we repaired or replaced twelve windows, one door, the cellar door, and half of the window shutters on the main building. We also sponsored the repair of the big barn door on the Craig House barn, which had been damaged by a major storm three years ago. The Craig House barn dates to about 1840 and is probably built on the site of the earlier barn, which was used as a hospital during the battle. This year’s project is to replace the remaining shutters on the main building. Most of these projects were carried out with the aid of matching grants from the Monmouth County Historical Commission.

 Craig House will open for the season on April 6, 2025, and will be open on Sundays from 1-4 PM, through December 7.

**TOURS AND TALKS MAINTAIN SCHEDULE**

 Our popular guided tours of the Park have maintained their schedule, as weather permits. The January 1 tour had almost 100 participants again this year. Despite cold and windy weather, the first three tours so far this year, plus a special Molly Pitcher sites tour on March 16, averaged 15 participants each. Thanks to FOMB board members John Resto and David Martin for leading these tours.

 FOMB President David Martin has given three programs so far in this year’s “Second Sunday” lecture series, with attendance averaging close to 40 people. We are perfecting our method of videotaping these lectures and will let you know how to access them after they are prepared and processed.

 Upcoming talks and tours this spring are on the enclosed calendar of events. Walking tours meet at the Visitor Center and are given at 1:30 PM on the first Sunday each month. The “Second Sunday” lectures are given at 2 PM in the Visitor Center.

**Our mailing address is:**

**Friends of Monmouth Battlefield, PO Box 122, Tennent, NJ 07763**

**SPRING PARK AND VISITOR CENTER**

**HOURS ANNOUNCED**

The Park Visitor Center is now open daily from 9 AM to 4 PM.

Currently the park gate hours are from 8AM to 6PM. Around Memorial Day, the gate hours will change to the summer hours of 8AM to 8PM.

Our gift shop in the Visitor Center is open on Sundays from 1-4 PM, and occasionally on Saturdays when we have staffing. Thanks go to Andy Beagle, George Dawson, John Resto, and David Martin for managing the gift shop.

**PARK LIBRARY UPDATE**

 We are pleased to report major progress on the new Park research library. Custom made bookcases have been installed in the meeting room of the old wing of the Visitor Center. Most of the books have been sorted and placed on the shelves. There is still much work to do to list and catalog the books, and to repair those that were accidentally affected by mold several years ago.

The research library is to be named in honor of past FOMB President and Battle of Monmouth scholar James T. Raleigh. We hope to have it fully operational in time for teh150th anniversary of the battle in 2028. Of course, we will keep you posted of our progress.

FOMB regularly purchases new titles on New Jersey in the Revolution for our reference library, especially those having to do with the battle of Monmouth.

 We also assist the Park staff in their research by paying for their access to key research sites, and by purchasing important research books that they request.

**FOMB AGAIN SPONSORS STUDENT ESSAY CONTEST**

This is the third year that the Friends of Monmouth Battlefield (FOMB) is sponsoring a student essay contest. It is open to all Freehold Regional School District seniors. The prize is a $500 scholarship. Entries are due by March 31, 2025. All submissions are done by the students through the district website and we will receive copies online from the district after March 31. Winner will be announced in April.

Selection Criteria for the contest are as follows.

1. Be a graduating high school senior residing in the Freehold Regional High School District.

2. Accepted to matriculate at a college or university (2 or 4 year) for the Fall 2023 semester (indicated on student application).

3. Applicants will submit an essay (750 -1500 words) on the following topic: “Why was the Battle of Monmouth critical to the overall success of the American Revolution”?

4. Applicant must have been involved in at least one school activity (indicated on student application).

5. Teacher letter of recommendation submitted with essay.

**WEEKEND IN OLD MONMOUTH SET FOR MAY 3-4**

 Each year the Monmouth County Historical Commission sponsors “Weekend in Old Monmouth” tours and open houses. As our part, we will have the historic Craig House open from 10 AM to 4 PM on May 3 and from 11 AM to 4 PM on May 4. We will have our usual battlefield walking tour May 4 at 1:30 PM, and the Park Visitor Center will be open its regular hours both days. Nearby sites related to the battle, including the Village Inn in Englishtown, Monmouth County Historical Museum in Freehold, and Covenhoven House in Freehold, will also be open

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**SCHEDULE OF EVENTS FOR SPRING 2025**

**April 6, 2025 (Sun) Walking tour of the battlefield.**

 **Meet at Visitor Center at 1:30 PM.**

**April 6, 2025 (Sun) Craig House opens for the season (1-4 PM)**

**April 13, 2025 (Sun) Second Sunday lecture by Dr. David Martin**

 **“Abraham Lincoln’s Sense of Humor”**

 **2 PM at the Visitor Center**

**May 3, 2025 (Sat) “Weekend in Old Monmouth” programming, Open House at historic Craig House. 10 AM - 4 PM.**

**May 4, 2025 (Sun) Walking tour of the battlefield.**

 **Meet at Visitor Center at 1:30 PM**

**May 4, 2025 (Sun) “Weekend in Old Monmouth” programming, Open House at historic Craig House. 11 AM- 4 PM.**

**May 11, 2025 (Sun) Second Sunday lecture by Dr. David Martin**

 **“George Washington as a Field Commander”**

 **2 PM at Visitor Center Auditorium**

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**REVOLUTIONARY WAR DAYS IN MONMOUTH COUNTY**

**FOMB Programs June 1 to July 4, 2025**

**June 1, 2025 (Sun) Walking tour of the battlefield (Hedge Row and**

**Parsonage). Meet at the Visitor Center at 1:30 PM.**

**June 8, 2025 (Sun) Second Sunday lecture by Dr. David Martin**

 **“The Court Martial of Major General Charles Lee” 2 PM at Visitor Center**

**June 22, 2025 (Sun) Driving tour to the Battle of Monmouth monument in downtown Freehold. Meet at the Park Visitor Center at 1:30 PM**

**June 28, 2025 (Sat) Annual Reenactment of the Battle of Monmouth**

 **Encampment and programs, 10 AM – 4 PM**

**June 29, 2025 (Sun) Annual Reenactment of the Batlle of Monmouth**

 **Encampment and programs, 10 AM – 3 PM**

**July 4, 2025 (Fri) Commemoration of Independence Day at the Park.**

 **Outside Visitor Center, 1 PM.**

**FOMB BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

(end of term in parentheses)

Caralee Bava-Grygo (2025) Freehold, NJ

Andrew Beagle (2027) South Plainfield, NJ

 George Dawson (2025) New Brunswick, NJ

 Kathy Doherty (2025) Old Bridge, NJ

 John Fabiano (2026) Allentown, NJ

 Dr. David Martin (2027) East Windsor, NJ

 Robert McCully (2026) Philadelphia, PA

 Marilyn Miller (2027) Toms River, NJ

 Fran Raleigh (2025) Colts Neck, NJ

 David Shakespeare (2027) Colts Neck, NJ

 John Resto (2026) South Plainfield, NJ

 Karen Timper (2025) East Brunswick, NJ

 Peter Wagner (2027) Englishtown, NJ

**OFFICERS (term ends December 2025)**

President David Martin

 Vice President John Resto

 Secretary Caralee Bava-Grygo

 Treasurer Kathleen Doherty

**FOMB RECEIVES OPERATING GRANT**

We are pleased to report that FOMB has received an operating grant of $4000 from the Monmouth County Historical Commission. The grant is to be used for our newsletters and brochures and for office expenses. Treasurer Kathy Doherty attended the grant presentation ceremony on February 24, 2025.

**Our website address is:** [**www.friendsofmonmouth.org**](http://www.friendsofmonmouth.org)

**2025 Membership Application**

The Revolution in New Jersey had profound meaning. To help keep the past alive, we ask for your commitment in Protecting, Preserving and Historically Interpreting Monmouth Battlefield State Park, a Registered National Historic landmark, and the sites associated with the Monmouth Campaign of 1778.

**Name \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Address \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**City \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**State \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Email address \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

***CHECK ONE***

***New membership Renewal***

**CIRCLE LEVEL OF MEMBERSHIP**

**Individual $20 Family $30**

**Senior Individual $5 Senior Family $10**

**Patron $100 Lifetime $250**

***The Friends rely on membership and donations for much of our general operating budget. If you would like to make a donation above the membership dues, we would deeply appreciate your thoughtfulness. The Friends is a 501(c)(3) not-for profit organization and your donation is fully tax-deductible. Thank you.***

**Donation included in the amount of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Friends of Monmouth Battlefield**

**PO Box 122**

**Tennent, NJ 07763**

**NEW JERSEY SOLDIER’S DIARY ON MONMOUTH**

 *This is an excerpt on the Monmouth campaign from the Revolutionary War diary of Captain Joseph Bloomfield of the 3rd New Jersey Continental Regiment. During the battle on June 28, 1778, this regiment participated in Major General Charles Lee’s abortive advance on Monmouth Courthouse in the late morning. Upon withdrawing from there, it helped hold the northern end of the Hedgerow line for a while, and then was held in reserve behind Perrine Hill for the rest of the day. Bloomfield’s diary is one of the best on the participation of a New Jersey soldier in the war. It was published by Westholme Publishing in 2018 under the title* Citizen Soldier, The Revolutionary War Journal of Joseph Bloomfield, *edited by Mark Lender and James Kirby Martin.*

May. The latter part of the month the 3d. & 4th. New Jersey Regts. with Genl.

Maxwell marched to Mount-Holly in West-Jersey where we were joined by the 1st. & 2nd. Regts. & Forman’s Corps.

June. We kept large commands on the lines below Haddonfield, Moores-Town &c. which were relived weekly. Engaged myself in Exercising the Brigade & the Baron de Steubens Instructions [new training from Valley Forge].

18. [June]. On the 18th of June (whilst the officers of the Brigade & Gentn. of the Town were feasting on Turtle & Punch &c. &c.) Information was brought that the Enemy were advancing from Haddenfield and Moores-Town to Mount-Holly.

19. [June]. At break of day our alarm Guns were fired. The Brigade immediately marched to the Black-Horse (six miles) & Halted. Genl. Clinton at 12 entered Mount Holly, where he continued with the whole Army till [June 22].

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22. [June]. Monday morning when they occupied our quarters, at the Black-Horse & we moved by way of Borden Town to Crosswicks.

23. [June]. The Enemy advanced, their front overtook our rear at Crosswicks`-Bridge where a smart skirmish ensured., the 3d. Jersey Regt. Covering the

Retreat of the Brigade & militia.

24. June. The British lay the night at Maidenhead [now Lawrenceville]. Wednesday near & Thursday night at Hydes-Town [Hightstown].

25. June.1778. This night I lay with Capt. Voorhees. Lieuts. Wm. Pyatt & Bloomfield with 50 Contl. Soldiers & 40 Militia on Taylor’s heights within a quarter of a Mile of Clinton’s Main Army. Fired upon & alarmed them several times in the night, and in the morning followed their rear. Capt. Voorhees party took 15 Prisoners & had several skirmishes with the Jagers. Took three Jagers myself Prisoners when I was reconnoitering within sight of the Enemys Rear. The Jersey Brigade with the Marquis D. la Faeyette, Genl.Eayne & Scott’s chosen corps lay together this Night in Upper-Freehold.

Friday. 26.June.Marched & Lodged with the above Troops to English Town where we were reinforced by Gen. Lee’s Division.

Saturday. 27. June. 1778. Lay on our Arms at English-Town, watching the motions of the Enemy.

Saturday. 28. [June]. Genl. Lee’s Division the Marquis’s corps. & the Jersey Brigade advanced within full view of the Enemy near Monmouth Court-House but were ordered to retreat, and form, and form & retreat in sight of the British Grenadiers who

BLOOMFIELD DIARY (cont.)

continued advancing till we fell in with Genl. Washington’s Main Army, when we were ordered to form the second line whilst the Front line commanded by our illustrious Genl. in person engaged the flower of the British army on the heights near Freehold Court-House in the County of Monmouth. Drove the proud King’s Guards & haughty British-Grenadiers, & gained Immortal-honor to the Shame & infamy of Genl. Lee who acted the part of the base [word omitted] in not engaging the Enemy when he had received positive orders to attack them. But History I expect will give a full account of this memorable action, justly censure Lee for his scandalous behavior & give to credit (if possible for the pen of a writer) to Gen’l Washington’s bravery & merit. The Front Line of the Army lodged on the Field of battle. The Rear line at English Town.

29. [June]. The whole Army lay at & near English Town.

Tuesday.30. June. 1778. Genl. Washington & the Main Army marched to Brunswick. The New Jersey Brigade to the lines near Middletown where we continued till 7th. July as the Enemy had all embarked & left the State (thank God) the 5th. of July, after which we marched to EnglishTown & relieved the Militia from Monmouth to Aqucanong by Weekly Commands sent from the Brigade which (now 25th.Augtr.) continues, & is like to continue in Eliz.Town where we want Nothing to make our time Pass Very agreeably.

June 1778. I forgot to mention that Lt. Col. Barber was wounded (ball passing through his right side) in the action 28 ulto. And that a day of feu de joy in commemoration of the late Battle was kept by the Main-Army in Brunswick the 4th. of July which far exceeded the feu de joy of the 6th. of May last at the Valley Forge.

**NO NEW NEWS ON WAREHOUSE**

We have1 no new news to report on the warehouse proposed for construction on Business Route 33 opposite the main entrance to Monmouth Battlefield State Park. A requirement was imposed last year for the builders to conduct a preliminary archaeological survey to determine if the warehouse site has any archaeological significance. If anything is found, a deeper archaeological survey may be required. A few construction details are also being discussed. As of the moment, final approval for the project has not been granted. Ideally, we would like to see the flex warehouse project denied, and the land involved be made part of the Park or otherwise preserved. However, we need to continue to beware that the land is zoned for warehouse use. We will certainly keep you posted!



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* **in part by an operating grant from the New Jersey Historical**
* **Commission, a Division of the Department of State, through grant funds administered**

**by the Monmouth County Historical Commmission.**