

# Morristown

NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK • NEW JERSEY

# SITE OF THE MAIN ENCAMPMENT OF THE AMERICAN ARMY AND HEADQUARTERS OF GEORGE WASHINGTON DURING THE CRITICAL WINTERS OF 1777 AND 1779-80



*During the 8 years of the American Revolution the small village of Morristown was the scene of significant military activities. It was here in January 1777 and again in December 1779 that Washington and the main body of the Continental Army arrived to establish winter quarters. Important brigades of the Army also wintered here in 1781 and 1782.*

*Morristown brilliantly illustrates Washington's courage, ability, and resourcefulness in the face of overwhelming difficulties. The winter encampments present a stark and realistic picture of the numerous hardships and sufferings endured by the common soldier during the Revolutionary War. Here, in the face of the bitter cold, hunger, hardship, and disease, the young Nation maintained its will to independence and freedom.*

*Only 30 miles from the British stronghold in New York City, Morristown was protected by the Watchung Mountains. From behind this range, Washington could watch British movements, guard supplies stored here, and cover major roads connecting the northern and southern States.*

## **THE FIRST ENCAMPMENT, 1777**

After American victories at Trenton and Princeton had blasted British hopes for an early end to the war, Washington decided to take his victorious yet exhausted forces into winter quarters. The Army arrived at Morristown on January 6, 1777. The Arnold Tavern on the village green probably served as Washington's headquarters. The Army itself occupied many farmhouses, homes, and other buildings in or near the village. Remaining here until May 1777, the commander in chief faced many crises, among them shortages of food and clothing, recruitment for his small army, and a serious outbreak of smallpox among the troops.

## **THE SECOND ENCAMPMENT, 1779-80**

In December 1779 the main Army returned to Morristown, and encamped in a hilly area south of the village known as Jockey Hollow. The soldiers began the construction of log huts for shelter, while Washington took up headquarters at the home of Col. Jacob Ford's widow. The winter proved to be the worst of the entire Revolutionary War. Washington struggled with acute problems of supply, army discipline, and relations with State governments and Congress. Spring brought some relief to the suffering troops and welcome news from the Marquis de Lafayette that a French army was on the way to aid in the struggle for independence.

## **ABOUT YOUR VISIT**

The Ford Mansion and museum are open every day from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. The Wick House is open every day from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m., February through November. Park roads in Jockey Hollow are open 9 a.m. to sunset. The park is closed Thanksgiving Day, December 25, and January 1. Groups will receive special service if advance arrangements are made with the superintendent.

The Primrose Brook Parking Area in Jockey Hollow contains a self-guiding nature trail, restrooms, and drinking water. Picnic facilities are also available, but fires and hunting are not permitted. Please obey all park regulations.

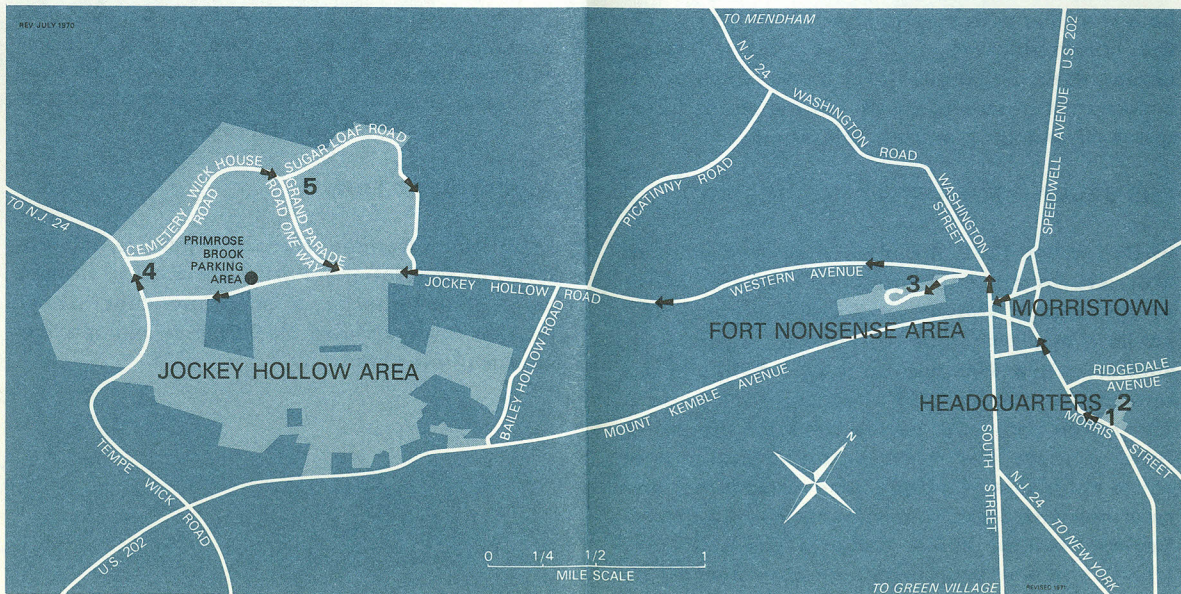
## **ADMINISTRATION**

Morristown National Historical Park is administered by the National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior. A superintendent, whose address is Morristown, NJ 07960, is in immediate charge of the park.

## A TOUR OF THE PARK

- 1. The Ford Mansion.** Washington's headquarters from December 1779 to June 1780; now restored with many original furnishings.
- 2. The Historical Museum.** Exhibits illustrate the Morristown story; collections of Revolutionary arms, household furnishings, and possessions of Washington are also on display.

- 3. Fort Nonsense,** the site of traditional fortifications and today a key orientation point overlooking the Morristown area.
- 4. Wick House and Farm.** Built about 1750, the house served as headquarters for Maj. Gen. Arthur St. Clair.
- 5. Jockey Hollow.** The scene of the 1779-80 encampment, with reconstructed huts and a Revolutionary hospital. Wayside exhibits and markers locate points of historic interest.



As the Nation's principal conservation agency, the Department of the Interior has basic responsibilities for water, fish, wildlife, mineral, land, park, and recreational resources. Indian and Territorial affairs are other major concerns of America's "Department of Natural Resources." The Department works to assure the wisest choice in managing all our resources so each will make its full contribution to a better United States—now and in the future.

National Park Service  
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