



# Washington-Rochambeau Revolutionary Route National Historic Trail e-Newsletter

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In this issue we highlight the recent trail assessment workshops, 250th anniversary planning, recognition of David Wagner receiving the French Legion of Merit, a special memorial service for French soldiers, Brandywine Village receiving a historical marker, passport stampers and upcoming events.

## History - Mission - Vision

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## Discovering a Revolutionary War Trail

The Washington-Rochambeau Revolutionary Route comprises a network of roads and waterways used by allied forces in the Yorktown campaign. Although population growth and urban development have erased almost all traces of the rural campsites and small taverns that once sheltered Revolutionary War soldiers, the public can still visit historic sites that tell the Washington-Rochambeau story. Strolling the green in Lebanon, Connecticut, taking a sail on the Chesapeake Bay, seeing a Revolutionary War reenactment at Colonial Williamsburg, or exploring the battlefield at Yorktown, are just a few of many opportunities to interact with history.

Travelers driving I-95 from Massachusetts to Virginia now make the trip in less than a day, and GPS systems guide them to lodging, fuel, and restaurants. It's worth remembering, however, that in colonial times, most of this land was wilderness. If not for the detailed surveys by engineers and cartographers during the allied campaign, French and American troops might not have reached Yorktown. That they did, so, defeated the British, and returned north—the French to go home, the Americans to win the war—remains an impressive feat.



Time of day and geographic location were of basic concern to soldiers on the march. To determine both, they may have relied on an instrument like this pocket compass and sundial (courtesy of the Library of Congress).

This map of Connecticut from Rochambeau's personal collection is titled "Connecticut, from the best authorities." In 1780-81 his special cavalry—Lafayette's Legion—spent eight months camped just west of Lebanon, Green.



Independence Hall, Independence National Historical Park, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania



White Clay Creek near Hale-Burns House, Stanton, Delaware



Mount Vernon, Mount Vernon, Virginia



Journey Through Hallowed Ground National Heritage Area, Annapolis, Maryland



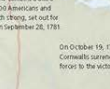
Prince William Forest Park, Washington, D.C.



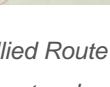
Reenactment in historic Colonial Williamsburg, Williamsburg, Virginia



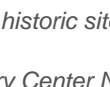
The Battle of Yorktown, Yorktown, Virginia



Cape Henry, Norfolk, Virginia



Cape Charles, Chesapeake Bay



Boats on the Chesapeake Bay



Reenactment in historic Colonial Williamsburg, Williamsburg, Virginia



Yorktown, Virginia

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Lebanon provided winter quarters for some 220 of the 300 horses of Lafayette's Legion from November 25, 1780, until June 20, 1781.

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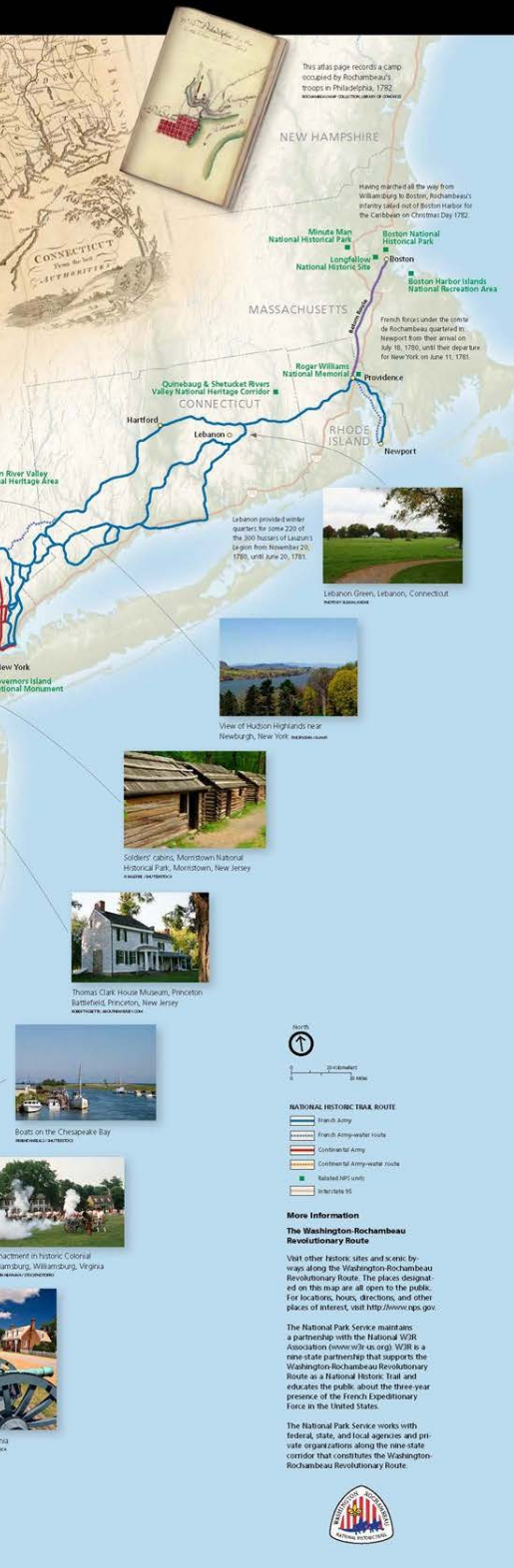
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Along this Allied Route Today: Map from RI, to VA. The Washington-Rochambeau Revolutionary Route comprises a network of roads and waterways used by allied forces in the Yorktown campaign. The public can still visit historic sites that tell the story.

Harpers Ferry Center NPS

The Washington-Rochambeau Revolutionary Route National Historic Trail (WARO) is 680 miles in length and comprises a network of roads and waterways used by French forces under Rochambeau and American forces under Washington in the Yorktown Campaign. The route spans nine states and the District of Columbia.

The military, logistical and cultural significance of this march served as a pivotal point in the American Revolutionary War. Without the assistance of thousands of French soldiers and sailors, many of whom gave their lives, the outcome of the war could have been different. Today the route includes many historic sites and scenic byways that are open to the public and important to explaining this key part of French and American history.

#### Mission

The mission of the Washington-Rochambeau Revolutionary Route National Historic Trail is to preserve and interpret the routes taken by American and French troops from 1781 – 1782 and to commemorate the role of the critical French-American alliance in the victory over British forces at the siege of Yorktown, Virginia.

#### Vision

Our vision is to commemorate the Washington Rochambeau Revolutionary Route National Historic Trail by making it relevant and meaningful to present day audiences through a clearly focused presence that includes innovative outreach and programming. In doing so we will foster relationships with partners and stakeholders to influence interest in the Trail and create visitor experiences.

## **NPS Kicks Off Workshops**

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*Robert Forloney, NPS contractor facilitating conversation in WARO's September assessment workshops with correlating historic sites.*

*NPS photo*

The Washington-Rochambeau Revolutionary Route National Historic Trail (WARO) recently held a series of trail workshops within states associated to the trail. WARO engaged with the owners and managers of high potential historic sites that have a direct correlation to the trail, who meet the following elements: important associations with the Yorktown Campaign, designated historic significance, opportunity to interpret trail themes, and accessible to the public. Together we identified current and future opportunities for the WARO visitor experience

Liz Clarke and Robert Forloney are the NPS contractors spearheading the assessment. Both Liz and Robert facilitated conversation on interpretive opportunities, visitor amenities, natural and cultural resource management, recreational uses, access, and the driving route alignment. The workshops were beneficial in identifying opportunities for partnering

and further developing the identity and future of the trail.



*WARO Superintendent Steve Sims expresses sincere appreciation to all who made the September assessment workshops a success.*

*NPS photo*



In 2026, the United States will honor and commemorate the 250th anniversary of American Independence. Recently WARO Superintendent, Steve Sims, and Trail Administrator, Johnny Carawan, attended a 250th planning meeting in Philadelphia. In the spirit of working together, they look forward to sharing information that may benefit your planning efforts.

Being visitor ready is a key tone within planning efforts. Elements of this include the aspects of wayfinding, technology, and the cycle of engagement. Visitors will most likely visit your site online before visiting in person, so having clear wayfinding and site information on your website is important. Also, we recommend reviewing your website and identify if it is user friendly and good for trip planning.

Interpretation is also a key element of regular and special events. Help visitors establish personal and emotional connections within the context of present day. Focus on pulling stories from untold corners. Also, identify if opportunities exist for creating a signature event.

WARO feels this trail has a significant opportunity to shine during the commemoration. We look forward to connecting with our partner locations along the trail to help provide resources and amplify your sites.

## In the Spotlight

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*David Wagner, artist : series titled "The*

### Wagner Receives French Order of Merit

Artist David R. Wagner has been awarded the French Order of Merit for his series of work titled "The Washington-Rochambeau Revolutionary Route." His series of contextual paintings and prints highlight the critical role that France played in helping America in the Yorktown Campaign, which led to securing America's independence.

David was honored at a reception in Connecticut

Washington-Rochambeau Revolutionary Route."

THE HUDSON RIVER VALLEY  
INSTITUTE, Photo Credit

this past August and will again be recognized at a decoration ceremony in Yorktown, Virginia this coming October.

See the article, [Local lifelong painter David Wagner honored by France](#), by local press

The Bulletin ~ 10 Railroad Place, Norwich, CT 06360.



Reenactors stand at attention as Jeff Canning speaks inside Old Saint Peter's Church about the presence of French soldiers in Van Cortlandtville during the Revolutionary War. With him is Anne de Neuville.

LUCIE POIRER, Photo





*Reenactors prepare to fire a musket salute outside Old Saint Peter's Church. Behind them are a large memorial stone and crosses erected in 1999. The monument at left lists the names of soldiers from the area who fought for American independence.*

*LUCIE POIRER, photo*

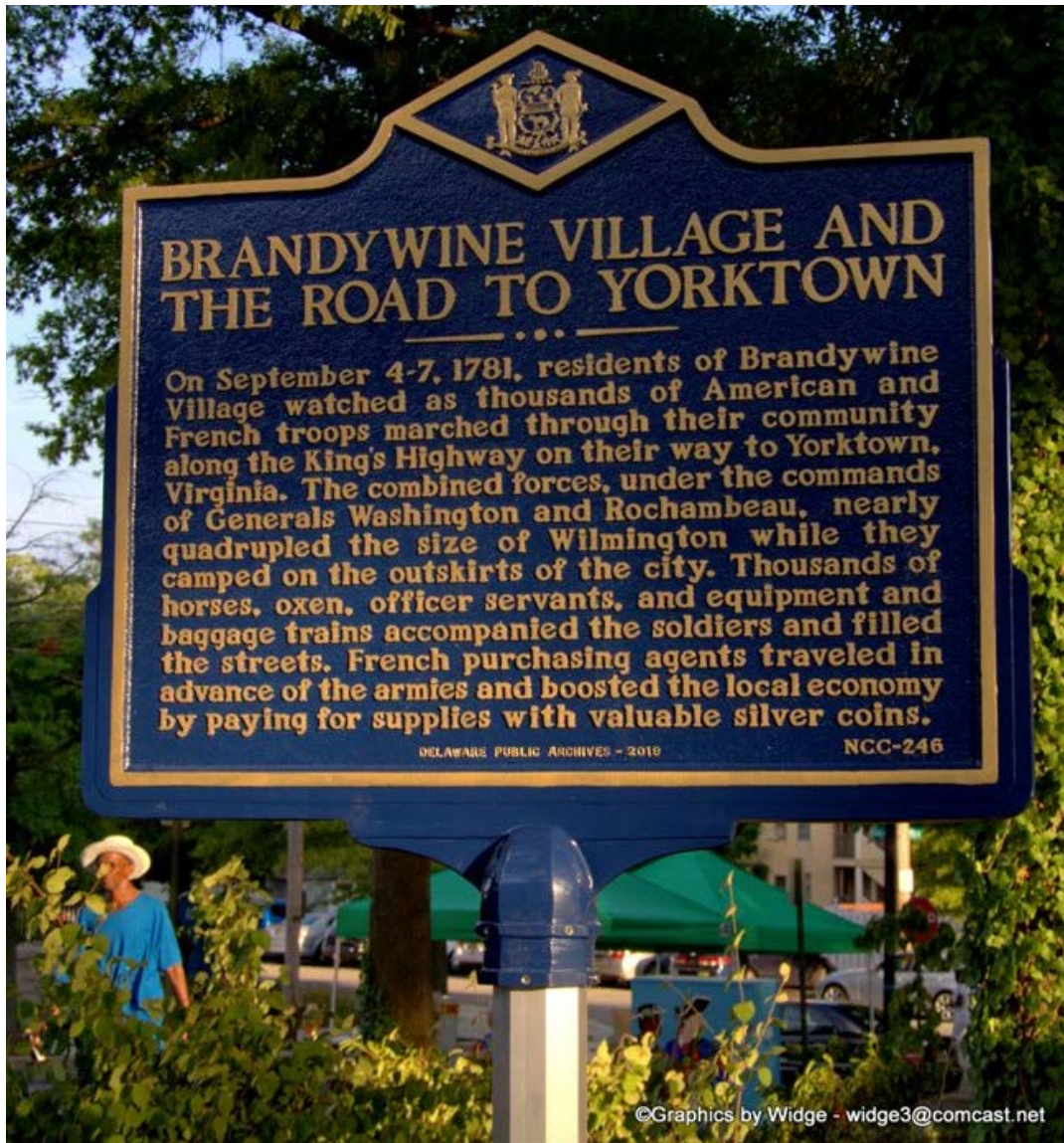
French forces used the church as a military hospital in 1781 and 1782 when they were in the area before and after the victory of Generals Washington and Rochambeau over the British in Yorktown, Virginia, in October 1781.

The service, which attracted about 25 people, continued a tradition that began in 2001 and featured a background talk, a musket salute and a mourn arms ceremony. It was led by Jeff Canning of W3R-US, and Anne de Neuville, of the Society.



*Bill Conley welcomes attendees to historical marker unveiling at Brandywine Village.*

*GEORGE WIDGER, Photo*



*Brandywine Village and the Road to Yorktown historical marker.*

*GEORGE WIDGER, Photo*

The marker reads, "On September 4 - 7, 1781, residents of Brandywine Village watched as thousands of American and French troops marched through their community along the King's Highway on their way to Yorktown, Virginia. The combined forces under the commands of Generals Washington and Rochambeau nearly quadrupled the size of Wilmington while they camped on the outskirts of the city. Thousands of horses, oxen, officer servants and equipment and baggage trains accompanied the soldiers and filled the streets. French purchasing agents traveled in advance of the armies and boosted the local economy by paying for supplies with valuable silver coins."

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## W3R - Maryland Receives State Grant



*W3R logo*

*W3R*

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Newberg, MD - Lawrence Abell, President of W3R-US, reports that the Maryland Historical Trust 'Maryland Heritage Area Program' recently announced that the W3R-MD was awarded a \$10,000 Matching Grant. The Maryland Veterans Museum at Patriot Park sponsored W3R - MD for the grant.

The project is a "Cultural Resource Survey" and Land and Water Based Route Reconnaissance for the Washington Rochambeau Revolutionary Route National Historic Trail in Charles County, Maryland. The survey is focused on the marches of French and American forces along the Post Road North and South to and from Yorktown in 1781 and 1782.

Maryland played a vital role in our nation's early history and pieces of that history have been lost. This survey will help to draw out historic information that will support data development for route wayfinding.



*WARO Passport Stamp*

*NPS photo*

## Trail Passport Stampers

The passport program was started by Eastern National Parks Association in 1986 and was established to help visitors discover the beauty and history found in America's national parks and national historic trails. Cancellation stamps can be found at national parks, national trails, and monuments. These rubber-stamp ink markings record the name of the park and the date of your visit.

We would like to expand this program to sites with direct association to the trail. Program participation and stampers are available for free.

If your site would like to be a participant in this program email WARO trail administrator, Johnny Carawan, for more information at [e-mail us](#).

# Upcoming Events

## Yorktown Day, October 19, 2019

Yorktown Day commemorates the surrender of Lord Cornwallis' British and German troops at Yorktown, Virginia, to General George Washington's Allied American and French troops on October 19, 1781.

## Future events

Send your future event information to [e-mail us](#)

## Next Newsletter

Next newsletter release is January 6, 2020. Please send any story submissions, event information, and pictures by December 1st, [e-mail us](#)



*WARO logo*

*NPS image*

Washington Rochambeau  
Revolutionary Route  
National Historic Trail

1400 North Outer Line Drive  
King of Prussia, PA 19406

(610) 738-1006

[www.nps.gov/WARO](http://www.nps.gov/WARO)

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