



An Urgent Dispatch for the General Staff

the E-newsletter of the W3R-US -- September 2009



Lafayette Remembered

In the morning of September 5 the Pencader Heritage Museum and the W3R-DE sponsored a ceremony to honor U.S. and French as allied during several wars and to dedicate a sign commemorating the four visits of Lafayette to Delaware. The museum is in Pencader, Delaware, just off Old Baltimore Pike -- a road that is part of the W3R. W3R members Kim Burdick and Veronica Eid were on the committee that planned this event.

Ralph Nelson, chair of the W3R-DE, cited examples and gave public thanks to people in Delaware's government, historical, and lineage organizations who helped achieve the designation of the W3R as a National Historic Trail.



Dr. Robert Selig (historian of the W3R, shown at left) spoke briefly (and in uniform as a commissary officer) about the logistics of feeding 6,000 men on the march. David Holloway -- who marched the entire route in 2006 and was in French army uniform -- spoke of his plans to march the route again in 2011.



After a parade with six Revolutionary War re-enactment units and a fife and drum medley the Glasgow High School Marching Band played the U.S. and French national anthems. Following an address by the Ambassador of France, the honorable Pierre Vimont, two Revolutionary War re-enactment units from the Delaware Military Academy fired two musket volleys and a cannon.



Marcus Hook Celebrates

In the afternoon of September 5 the town of Marcus Hook, Pennsylvania, held its first annual W3R event (followed by an ice cream social) on the anniversary of the day on which General Washington received the news (in this town) that French Admiral deGrasse's fleet had entered the Chesapeake Bay without encountering a British fleet.

Dr. Robert Selig (historian of the W3R) spoke about the emotion of that moment. Washington was generally regarded as a stern presence, but on this occasion, "he was as happy as a child whose every wish for Christmas had been granted" according to reports from the diaries of officers and aides.



Selig noted that the allied march received considerable help from people who lived on or near the route. The armies camped near Marcus Hook for several days, while the residents baked their bread, washed their clothes, and offered them meals. All of this contributed to the army's ability to reach Yorktown rapidly and in good health.

After the talk Ursula Reed presented a 54 x 28" W3R banner to the town on behalf of the W3R-PA. This will be flown from a light pole in town during the annual W3R celebration.

Lafayette's 252nd Birthday

In the evening of September 5 Alan Hoffman, chair of the W3R-MA, spoke at the Hale-Byrnes House in Stanton DE about the course of U.S.-French relations since Lafayette's 20th birthday, which was celebrated here 232 years ago during a general staff meeting of the American Army. The event was sponsored by the Alliance Française of Delaware, a W3R affiliate.

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Dreams of a Future W3R-NHT

by Ralph Nelson (Chair, W3R-US) -- DEpatriot@aol.com

With the designation of the W3R as a National Historic Trail (NHT) the W3R-US has entered another transitional phase, during which the National Park Service (NPS) will develop, review, and approve a Comprehensive Management Plan (CMP) for the trail. The role of the W3R now is to continue its basic development work on the trail (required for any CMP), increase our membership (required to plan events with local affiliates), strengthen its ties with affiliates, provide more resources (such as speakers and tour guide brochures) to the public, and expand its brochure content and distribution points to include more museums and parks along the trail.

As we do this we shall learn to work effectively with the NPS, other National Historic Trail groups, and other national organizations that explain the struggle for liberty independence to U.S. citizens and foreign tourists. We are contacting these organizations for assistance in providing W3R displays, brochures, and speakers for regional and national meetings, such as the table display that Nicole Yancey and Ralph Nelson provided for a meeting of the SAR of Virginia in mid-September.

Calendar of Events

Oct 17 - Exec Comm Meeting in Yorktown VA

Oct 18 - Fall Board of Directors Meeting and Regional Workshop in Yorktown VA

Oct 19 - The W3R-US marches in the Yorktown Day parade in Yorktown VA

Sometime this winter - a weekend retreat to discuss the future structure of the W3R-US -- to develop Bylaw amendments for vote at the 2010 Annual Meeting

April 10, 2010 - Annual Meeting of the W3R, perhaps a dinner Friday night, perhaps a tour of the area for people staying for Sunday. Place may be Marist College in Poughkeepsie NY or Philadelphia PA.

Opportunities for State W3Rs

Activities that will develop resources for public use:

- 1) Work with affiliates to hold a commemoration related to a W3R event or person.
- 2) Give talks or setup a display on the W3R for an affiliate group or a public gathering or a classroom.
- 3) Determine a primary auto tourism route and promote it. Sent this route to the W3R-US Web site manager for posting on the Web.
- 4) Driven that route for fifty miles or bicycle a safe part of that or a nearby route for 20 miles or walk along a safe part of that route or a nearby walking trail for five miles.
- 5) Work with your affiliates and the state to fund and complete a research report on the documentation for W3R activities in the state and buildings present along the route in 1781 [if this hasn't yet been done].
- 6) Developed a one-page trifold brochure and distribute it to interested people. Tell what the W3R is, what W3R events happened in your state, and where they might go on the Web to get further information.
- 7) Suggest to affiliates, secure funds and a location, design, fabricate, and hold a public ceremony to dedicate a marker on a W3R event in your state.
- 8) Identify someone who could work as a local docent for a tour company (such as Elderhostel) to describe W3R events in the area. The docent would board the tour bus and speak for an hour or so as the bus tours W3R sites -- and would be paid for the work.
- 9) Develop W3R-themed markers for historic sites along the route such as a plaque to put on historic homes or a banner for annual use on town light poles during the week that the allied armies passed through town.
- 10) Work with W3R affiliates to establish a five-year series of jointly-sponsored public presentations. In the last year a new series could be planned, providing a continual series of W3R events for the area.

Biosketch of a W3R-RI Leader

Not yet available; will be published when submitted

Biosketch of a W3R-VA Leader

Not yet available; will be published when submitted