



## What Does the W3R<sup>®</sup> on that Sign Mean???

Curious fifth-graders from Rhode Island to Virginia are asking this question as they notice new route markers along their roads. W3R<sup>®</sup> represents the letters WRRR -- the first letters in the phrase **Washington-Rochambeau Revolutionary Route**. But who are Washington and Rochambeau, and why did they travel along this revolutionary route?

These signs mark a 680-mile historical trail (with many side-trails) that runs from **Newport RI** to **Yorktown VA**. Starting in 1776 the U.S. fought to gain independence from Great Britain. Soon France became an ally of the United States. General George Washington led the U.S. army. General Rochambeau (whose full name was Jean Baptiste Donatien de Vimeur, Comte de Rochambeau) led the French Expeditionary Force that came to Newport, Rhode Island, to help the U.S. In the summer of 1781 the allied U.S.-French armies marched down the major highways of that day to get to Yorktown, Virginia. There they besieged and captured a British army led by General Charles Cornwallis.

- W3R<sup>®</sup> alone means the historic 680-mile route and allied aid during 1775-1783.
- W3R<sup>®</sup>-US means the present-day national organization, which sponsors research, places signs, and organizes commemorative and educational activities along the trail. The full name of this non-profit corporation is The National Washington-Rochambeau Revolutionary Route Association, Inc.
- W3R<sup>®</sup>-RI, W3R<sup>®</sup>-VA, etc., refer to the organizations which run state programs.
- W3R<sup>®</sup>-NHT refers to the complex of trails and affiliated sites that comprise the W3R<sup>®</sup> National Historic Trail, administered by the National Park Service (NPS). The Congressionally designated name of the trail is Washington-Rochambeau Revolutionary Route National Historic Trail; its NPS acronym is WARO.

Go the Website **[www.w3rus.org](http://www.w3rus.org)**. Click on Events to see photo-reports on many events that have been held to commemorate that great march and all the aid provided to the United States by France in 1775-1783.

Click on History to see many fine illustrations of the W3R<sup>®</sup> and to find answers to: How many French soldiers came to the U.S.? How long did they stay? Where did they march? How many died here?

Click on Tours to get suggestions for modern day auto tours along the W3R<sup>®</sup>.