

Presentations Available in Pennsylvania, Delaware, and Maryland

This list is arranged in order of the speaker's initials. Those initials are followed by a) the geographic area within which the speaker can give the presentation free of charge and b) a list of the titles and abstracts of this speaker's presentations.

To get further information and contact information for a particular topic please send an Email to spkrmgr@w3r-archive.org.

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Speaker: GFW -- available within 50 miles of
Baltimore MD

=> Irregular Warfare on the Revolutionary Frontier:
Although the British forces enjoyed the aid of many American Indian allies in the War of Independence, many observers and historians see the fighting that occurred on the frontier as a sideshow, or barely related to the conflict. This presentation explores the British employment of irregular troops and allied Indian warriors in the American back-country during the period from 1777, when Britain first convinced its Indian allies to enter the war with offensive operations, to the American retaliatory campaigns of 1779. Specifically, the narrative opens with an explanation of how the initial operations began as a diversion for Burgoyne's campaign in 1777, progressed to a major campaign in its own right in 1778, and climaxed with the Continental Army's campaign to "chastise" those of the Six Nations of Iroquois and their dependents "that were hostile to the US" in the controversial "Sullivan-Clinton" and "Brodhead" Campaigns of 1779.

At the conclusion, participants will better understand the nature of warfare on the Revolutionary frontier. Unlike some interpretations, the information supports the view that Continental Army's 1779 Indian Campaign was a strategic as well as a tactical military success, a fact often overlooked by many historians today.

=> The Siege of Yorktown: the Decisive Engagement of the American War for Independence

Although no one doubts the importance of the engagement, few histories of the Yorktown campaign of 1781 give more than casual mention of the actual conduct of the siege, while spending far more ink in describing the fights for Redoubts 9 and 10, or Lord Cornwallis' troops grounding their arms at the surrender field to the accompaniment of "World Turned Upside Down." The military operation which culminated in the British surrender, however, was a classic example of the successful application of a well-established and formal tactical doctrine. This presentation explores the intricacies and the technical expertise required to carry out an effective

and successful siege operation, illustrated by the events at Yorktown. The explanation includes descriptions of 18th-century field fortification design and construction, as well as the methods for successfully reducing them. Specific topics, such as the purpose and rationale for building parallel and approach trenches, as well as the employment of various classes of artillery, are also covered.

At the conclusion, participants will better understand how the Franco-American forces were able to destroy the combat power of a major British field army defending a well-fortified position without resorting to a bloody frontal assault. Although it did not mark the end of hostilities, the siege of Yorktown proved to be the decisive battle of our War for Independence.

=> FRENCH AND INDIAN / SEVEN YEARS WAR -- Virginia's Colonial Military Establishment:

This presentation explains the structure of Virginia's military establishment during much of the colonial period and include topics such as the organization, leadership, training and tactics employed. After giving a short background on the evolution of the colony's armed forces from the late seventeenth to the mid-eighteenth centuries, the lecture's content concentrates on the period of the Seven Years War/ French and Indian War. Participants will learn how and why the province's General Assembly enacted its regulatory requirements, how Virginians participated in their own defense, as well as the similarities and differences between the common militia and provincial standing forces, including the ranger service, when and how each were used "in times of danger," and how well they "cooperated" with British regulars. Particular attention will be given to the training and tactical doctrine employed in combat against American Indian enemies. The results are surprising, and run contrary to the traditional interpretation.

At its conclusion, participants will understand why and how the colony's military forces functioned in peace and war, and possibly "bust" some long-held myths about American citizen-soldiers of the colonial period, especially with regard to frontier warfare.

=> Lord Dunmore's War: No Other Motive than the True Interest of This Country

This presentation explains the causes and conduct of the last Indian War before the start of the American War for Independence. It will provide some background on the constitutional crisis to lend context to the period of Dunmore's tenure as royal governor, during what became known as the "Quiet Time" on the eve of the Revolution. Fought between the Colony of Virginia and a confederation of the Shawnee and Mingo Indians in the Ohio Country, many historians pay it little attention or misinterpret its historical significance. However, John Murray, fourth Earl of Dunmore, the last royal governor of Virginia, led the colony's soldiers "in his majesty's service" on a successful military expedition.

Conducted against the backdrop of the deepening constitutional crisis that soon spun out of control, the campaign's decisive battle was fought as delegates from twelve of the thirteen colonies met in Philadelphia in the First Continental Congress. Although Lord Dunmore returned to Williamsburg in triumph and at the height of his popularity in December, before another year ended he would be vilified by Virginians and flee his capital.

At the conclusion, participants will learn that Revolution was not necessarily inevitable in 1774 Virginia. Furthermore, Dunmore's War had a surprising beneficial effect that favored the Americans in the early years of the Revolutionary War. It will also inform participants, and dispel many "myths", about the organization, composition, and tactical doctrine of Virginia's colonial militia before the Revolution.