



The Brandywine Dispatch



SUMMER 2022

History Lives at Colonial Days!

We are happy to announce that Colonial Days is once again being presented at the Brandywine Battlefield Park, following two years of remote programming. Students attending area school districts have returned to the Park to actively participate in Colonial Days, a keystone education program provided by the Brandywine Battlefield Park Associates.

Shelia Bliss, Education Program Coordinator, supervises the program and supports the volunteer presenters for each program component. Volunteers are dressed in period costume appropriate for the specific demonstrations. Colonial Days content provides unique insight into life in the 18th century, particularly in the Quaker dominated Brandywine Valley. The Battle of the Brandywine and the challenges faced by the Continental Army are presented by historical reenactors.

The Colonial Garden The historic yard garden is planted next to the Ring House. Students learn about the plants and herbs used for medicines and housekeeping issues, as well as for cooking and food.

18th Century Carpenter Students experience the craft of the carpenter as they learn about the importance and contribution of a skilled carpenter through the use of woodworking tools.

Life of a Soldier "Ned Hector" (interpreted by Noah Lewis) fought at the Battle of the Brandywine, shares his personal story and the life of a continental soldier.



Mario the Carpenter presents 18th Century Carpentry to students

Read a Letter, Write a Letter-Writing in the 18th Century Students make paper and experience writing with a quill and ink as they learn the importance of communication through letter writing in Colonial America.

18th Century Blacksmith the "Smithy" and his Striker (apprentice) fire up the forge and "strike while the iron is hot." Students learn about being an apprentice of this skilled craft and the history, technology, techniques, and economic importance of this vital trade.

Medicine in the American Revolution Colonial medicine, treatments, procedures and how plants from the historic garden were processed and used to treat a variety of ailments are presented.

Life of a Quaker Family This program demonstrates the lifestyle of a Quaker family living in the Brandywine Valley during the battle, how a Quaker family lived, worked and played at the Gideon Gilpin House located at the Park. The cultural beliefs of the Quakers are compared to modern beliefs and lifestyle and addresses the impact the Battle of the Brandywine had on the Quaker community.

Additional segments include "What's Old, What's New;" "A Revolutionary Soldier Dress-Up" can be included in "Life of a Soldier;" "A Quaker Girl Dress-up" can be included in "Life of a Quaker Family" and "Colonial Dancing."

*The Brandywine Dispatch is the newsletter for the Brandywine Battlefield Park.
The Brandywine Dispatch is published by the Brandywine Battlefield Park Associates.
"Keeping the Story Alive and Interesting!"*



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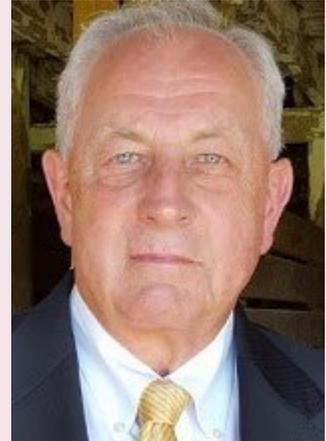
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The President's View

“Membership, the Core of Our Organization”: The *Brandywine Battlefield Park Associates (BBPA)*, established in 1971 (circa) was established as, and is, a *Membership* based organization. The non-profit Bylaws focus is on membership for fundamental structure. Essentially, BBPA was established as an *adjunct* to support the Pennsylvania Historic and Museum Commission (PHMC) and tasked as trustee to administer the Brandywine Battlefield Park (BBP) for the citizens of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. BBPA is the “arms and legs” or the *Worker bees*. BBPA has valiantly assumed this role, which has changed over time. BBPA can accomplish things which our partner PHMC cannot. BBPA develops and recruits Volunteers for Education Programs, as well as major events. Looking at a linear graph illustration of the BBPA organization, one can visualize a series of concentric circles. Membership is central at the core of the circle. Membership is our heart and soul of the BBPA Organization encompassing the membership of individuals and families.



Why be a member?

- ◆ support enthusiasm and interest.
- ◆ provide for the vital *human capital* of volunteers.
- ◆ people who become members are involved and feel positive about their inclusion with this historic community and the community at large.

In closing, my mission for the next year is encourage, develop and grow membership. Please join me on this crusade!

Regards,

Linn (Linnell) Trimbell
President, Board of Directors
Brandywine Battlefield Park Associates

Please visit our website for more information about
Membership and to become a Member

www.bandywinebattlefield.org

History Challenge

ODD MAN OUT

Which of these does not belong?

During the battle of Brandywine, Gen. Washington had to contend with several crossings on the Brandywine Creek. Which of these was not one of them?

Buffington

Wistar's

Darlington's

Jones

In the American Revolution, there were numerous Officers with whom Gen. Washington relied on. Who was not one of them?

Nathaniel Greene

Philip Schuyler

John Sullivan

Henry Clinton

There were many spies in the American Revolution. One of these was not one of them.

Caleb Brewster

Robert Morris

Nathan Hale

Austin Roe

Answers on page 6

Words that are common today often had completely different meanings in Colonial America. Here are a few:

Anchor- (n) A frequent misspelling of *anker*, about 10 gallons. In 1719, William Byrd admitted that: "a smuggler brought some brandy and I bought two half anchors."

Banker- (n) A man or ship that fished the Newfoundland Banks. A 1710 Boston newspaper reported: "A French Banker of fourteen guns, laden with fish, arrived there from Newfoundland."

Factor- (n) An agent. From Latin. A 1742 letter from New York to the Board of Trade said, "Trade from Holland is carried on by factors here for the sake of their commission."

Hammock- (n) (1) A small hill. In 1709 John Lawson instructed, "Steer W.N.W. the East-point of Bluff-Land at Hatteras bearing E.N.E. the Southermost large Hammock toward Oca-cock." (2) A piece of land suitable for hardwoods. In 1756 John Bartram wrote, "The hammocks of live-oaks and palmettos are generally surrounded either with swamp or marsh."

Nappy- (n) A frothy ale. Probably because its head was nappy, frothy. A 1728 song extolled: "a jug of brown Nappy."

Site Administrator's Report

Spring is in full swing, and there has been a flurry of activity at the site since I last communicated with everyone. Since our opening and particularly over the last few weeks, we've seen a large influx of people. In addition to our regular tours, we've conducted a few scheduled tours with both adult and school groups. Highlights have included repairing and replanting our colonial yard garden thanks to the hard work of some dedicated volunteers.

Our house guides: Mark, John, Nick, and Fred have provided our visitors with numerous tours of the Ring and Gilpin homes. Some of these tours have ranged from two guests to as many as forty. I've conducted a couple of tours myself and have enjoyed seeing the interest and enthusiasm for our site, its occupants, and the subject matter. One couple, all the way from California, made it a point to visit the site because the wife is a direct descendant of Benjamin Ring. Another group, the Retired Military Officer's Association - Valley Forge Chapter, of which our own Fred Magner is a member, visited the site and were impressed by the beauty of the site and by Fred's knowledge of colonial history.

Colonial Days was presented at the Park for the first time since 2019. Our largest group consisted of 360 students with accompanying chaperones. Of those five schools, four were colonial day programs. In addition to the Colonial Day component programs, students also visit the historic houses, the visitor's center for the film, gift shop, and museum. During one of these programs, we were assisted by the 1st Delaware Regiment, who discussed civilian life during the colonial period.

Highlights have included repairing, preparing and replanting our colonial yard garden thanks to the hard work of some dedicated volunteers. Our gardening group of Stevie DeMott, Carol Tynan, Mario Lerario, Linn Trimbell, and Robin Baker have been busy clearing the garden of the irrepressible weeds and planting herbs used for cooking, aromatics, medicine, and other household purposes. When you visit the park, you'll notice that the beds are color-coded with green highlighting the cooking herbs, white for aromatics, red for medicinal herbs, and blue for household use. Some of these herbs have multiple uses. For instance, lemon balm is an aromatic as well as a household herb and can be used in potpourri and as an insect repellent.

Finally, I want to mention the new faces you may see at the park. Sheila Bliss has filled our Education Program Coordinator position, which was vacant after the departure of Andrew Outten. Sheila brings a wealth of experience as an educator at several area schools, working primarily with elementary age students. Among her duties, Sheila will be creating and developing educational programs as well as coordinating with teachers and other educational organizations. She is already a master at the art of papermaking for our colonial day program.

Thanks to all our volunteers for their hard work and dedication to Brandywine Battlefield Park. Our continued and sustained growth is largely due to your efforts. I also want to thank all our members and contributors for your financial gifts and for promoting our site. Thanks again and have a great rest of your spring and summer.



Troy Grubb
PHMC Site Administrator

Brandywine Battlefield Park
OPEN- Tuesday-Thursday 10:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.
Gates Open-Passive recreation on Park grounds
Friday and Saturday 10:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.
Visitor Center Open Tours Available
Please check the website for updates!



The Colonial Kitchen Garden

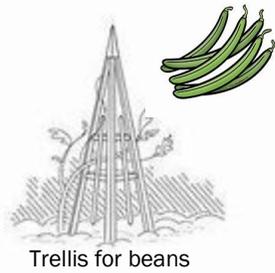
Throughout the Spring I toiled in the gardens. I cleared the winter debris, prepared, amended, dug holes, planted and watered. Everything looked perfect-for about two days. Now I sit in the gardens and wonder at the explosion of frenzied growth from wanted plants and weeds alike. Two questions come to my mind:

Where did that 5 foot thistle come from?

and

How did the Colonial gardeners ever manage?

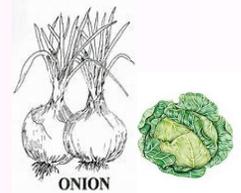
The Colonial garden wasn't just for vegetables. It was a larger space than the door garden and surrounded by a fence to keep the wildlife from damaging the crops. The size of the garden depended on the size of the family. The success of their gardens was literally a matter of life and death. Not only did the gardens provide much wanted fresh produce during the growing season, the gardens also provided the crops to be harvested and preserved for use during the winter months.



Trellis for beans

Garden space was at a premium so plants requiring more space were grown on southern facing slopes. This included potatoes, pumpkins, squash, gourds and Indian ground nuts. Some of the crops in the garden included corn, lettuces, radishes, onions, cucumbers, beans, cabbage and peas. Fruit trees, primarily apple and pear, were planted near the garden fence. The Colonials

practiced companion planting. Squash, maize and climbing beans are known as the Three Sisters (of agriculture). Mounds of soil with flattened tops were built for each group of crops. In the center of each mound several maize seeds were planted. When the maize reached 6" tall, beans and squash were planted alternately around the maize. The beans used the maize as a structure to climb up and also provided the nitrogen needed by the other two plants. The squash acted as a groundcover that reduced weeds and retained moisture. Additional beans were trained on poles or a trellis.



ONION



Pests were a threat to the health of the garden. Colonial gardeners planted a variety of herbs among their food crops to deter the pests. Onions were planted between the cabbages to confuse the bugs-companion planting. Garlic was planted to repel aphids, cabbage moths, bean beetles, peach borer and rabbits, and mint was planted to repel aphids, cabbage moths, flea beetles, squash bugs, whiteflies, and even ants.



April 2022



June 2022



The Benjamin Ring House Door Garden restored and ready for visitors.

Interview with Shelia Bliss

Shelia joined the BBPA family in May, 2022 as the Education Program Coordinator.

Editor: Welcome Shelia! What initially triggered your interest in the Education Director position, the Brandywine Battlefield Park Associates and the Brandywine Battlefield Park?

Shelia: I have a deep love for history and an even deeper love for educating and invoking a passion in 21st century students about 18th century life. We live in an area of immense historical gravity, and I would like to see more school districts foster a profound appreciation for the significance of the history of our township.

Editor: How have your past experiences/field of study prepared you for this position?

Shelia: I am a retired schoolteacher. I have twenty-two years of classroom experience. I have a B.S. and an M.Ed. in Elementary Education, Level I and Level II certification. I have taught sixth grade, kindergarten and preschool.

Editor: Where do you find inspiration for the work you are performing with the education programs?

Shelia: Troy and Linn have been fundamental in terms of guidance, support and inspiration but ultimately as Education Director, my inspiration comes from the children. Witnessing children bridge connections between the past and the present is inspiring and motivating to me.

Editor: What do you see as the most rewarding part of your position?

Shelia: When a student on a field trip says to me, “I can’t wait to go home and tell my mom what I learned” I consider that a rewarding and successful day. When a child finds meaning and association between the past and the present and can scaffold his learning of prior knowledge into a new pathway of assimilation it makes my work at BBP truly valid and full of purpose.

Editor: What would you like to accomplish as the Education Director, both short term and long term?

Shelia: Regarding short term goals, I am looking forward to learning everything I can about the history of the park and the community as well as familiarizing myself with BBP’s wonderful programs. I am especially excited about re-establishing the summer camp programs. Regarding long term goals, I am very excited about being a part of Brandywine Battlefield Park Association and building long lasting relationships with the community as well as my colleagues.

Shelia: I am a graduate of Penn State University and Widener University. I have been married to my high school sweetheart, Rick Bliss, for twenty nine years. I live in Concord Township in Glen Mills. I have three beautiful smart children. Ciara who is twenty-four and finishing up her degree in Criminal Justice at West Chester University. My daughter Zoe, who is twenty-two and finishing up her degree in Design Studies at West Virginia University and my son Lucas, who is nineteen and transferring from Canada to study History and Computer Sciences.

History Challenge Answers from page 3: #1 Darlington's, #2 Clinton, and #3 Robert Morris.



OUR MISSION

“To preserve, interpret and share the impact of the enduring story of the Battle of the Brandywine, the largest single day land battle of the American Revolution.”

Volunteer Spotlight



18th Century Carpenters

John Gras (right) has served as “John the Carpenter” for many years and shared his time, knowledge and talent with thousands of students. John is now “passing the tools” to Mario Lerario who is now known as “Mario the Carpenter.” Mario has already presented the 18th Century Carpenter program to hundreds of students during the Colonial Days programs. Thank you John and Mario!



Roy Steward

(1949-2021)

Roy was a benefactor Member. He volunteered at the Park for BBPA Events and Special Board Projects. He always enjoyed helping at the Battlefield whenever he could. Roy served in the United States Army Special Forces and earning his Green Beret from 1969 to 1972. Roy graduated from Temple University in 1976 with his degree in electrical engineering and was a very accomplished engineer. Roy passed away in August, 2021 and we miss his great smile, willing hands and kind heart.

If you are interested in becoming a volunteer at the Brandywine Battlefield Park or know someone who might, please visit our website for more information and to fill out a registration form!

www.brandywinebattlefield.org

or

bbpavolunteerdirector@gmail.com

“The Brandywine Battlefield Park Associates is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization, EIN #23-2143174. The official registration and financial information of the Brandywine Battlefield Park Associates may be obtained from the Pennsylvania Department of State by calling toll free, in Pennsylvania, 1-800-732-0999. Registration does not imply endorsement”

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