

Inside THE BRICK ACADEMY



The Historical Society of the Somerset Hills

October 2026

MILITARY MOVEMENTS IN THE SOMERSET HILLS

By Roy Crego

The 250th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence has passed, but America250 will keep passing Revolutionary milestones for the next seven years. In the Somerset Hills, the milestones are largely troop movements through the area, which provided a critical route, sheltered from the British between New York and Philadelphia.

- Charles Lee to Basking Ridge - 1776

In December 1776 after the American defeats around New York, General Charles Lee moved his division from Westchester across New Jersey to join General Washington in Pennsylvania. His route should have taken him through Vealtown (Bernardsville) and Bedminster, but he left the column to stay at Widow White's Tavern in Basking Ridge. On December 12, 1776, British cavalry captured him there.

- Sullivan to Lamington - 1776

After Lee's capture, Gen. John Sullivan assumed command of the division and in December 1776, successfully moved the American troops across Bedminster Township to Lamington and eventually joined George Washington in Pennsylvania.

- Washington through Pluckemin and Vealtown - 1777

In January 1777, following the American victories at Trenton and Princeton, General George Washington led the main Continental Army north to Pluckemin where they paused briefly, before heading on to Vealtown and winter quarters at Morristown.

- Greene to Basking Ridge - 1777

While encamped in Morristown, Washington sent a force under General Nathanael Greene to Basking Ridge. Their mission was to harass British supply lines between Perth Amboy and New Brunswick. Greene's headquarters from February to April 1777 were at the Basking Ridge estate of Lord Stirling (William Alexander), another of the American generals.

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Lord Stirling 1770s Festival

Sunday, October 4
11:30 AM - 4:00 PM

Celebrate a local Revolutionary War hero, one of George Washington's top Major Generals, at the former site of Lord Stirling's 700-acre estate. The festival, promoting historical and environmental education, includes early crafts and trades, period reenactors, kids activities, colonial music, and 18th century excavated wine cellar. The Historical Society will host a festival booth to publicize upcoming programs, membership benefits, and volunteer opportunities.



Sponsored annually by the Somerset County Park Commission, the event is held rain or shine at 96 Lord Stirling Road (off South Maple Avenue) in Basking Ridge. *Suggested Donation: \$5 per person*

Details at www.visitsomersetnj.org



Saturday, October 10
10 AM - 4 PM

Sunday, October 11
12 PM - 4 PM

Over thirty historic sites will participate in Somerset County's twenty-first annual event of special exhibits, interactive demonstrations, guided tours, and music concerts...*all open and free to the public!*

Explore the area's quaint villages, learn about prominent residents, witness early colonial life, and discover Revolutionary War sites.

The Brick Academy, THSSH headquarters, will feature "What Put Somerset Hills on the Map" - a permanent display of the five neighboring communities, a special exhibit 'History Happened Here: America 250 in the Somerset Hills', and locally excavated Lenni Lenape artifacts. The upper floor c1800 schoolroom, designed for education programs, consists of a pot belly stove, period furniture, and early student classwork.

Details at www.schistoryweekend.com

STRANGER STOP AND CAST AN EYE: AN INTRODUCTION TO NEW JERSEY'S HISTORIC BURIAL GROUNDS

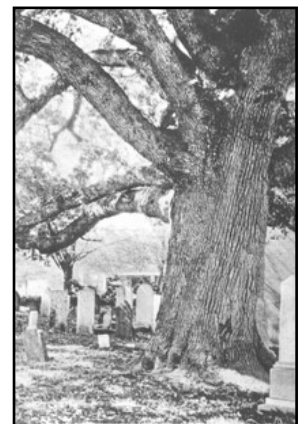
Date: Wednesday, October 21 Time: 7 - 9 PM

Location: The Brick Academy, 15 W. Oak Street, Basking Ridge

Admission: \$15 for Members / \$20 for Non-members (*Cash only at door*)

Far from being scary, spooky places, New Jersey's historic burial grounds are treasure troves of information for historians, genealogists, archaeologists, and art historians. This richly illustrated presentation examines New Jersey historic cemeteries from High Point to Cape May. It provides a chronological overview of New Jersey's historic burial places from the colonial period to the present. Exceptional examples of colonial, Victorian, and modern memorials are all presented and discussed. Particular attention is paid to the Revolutionary time period. Audiences leave with a new appreciation for grave markers and burial places as important sources of information about local history.

We are delighted to host our speaker, **Richard Veit**, Ph.D., RPA, Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and Professor of Anthropology, Monmouth University. Dr. Veit is also currently directing the archaeological dig at Lord Stirling Manor in Basking Ridge, the 18th century home of Revolutionary War General William Alexander (Lord Stirling).



Special America 250 Dinner Program & Annual Members Meeting



Thursday, November 12

6:30 - 9:30 PM

The Bernards Inn (“The Bernie”)

\$75 per person

Please join us for an enjoyable evening of dining and history featuring acclaimed historian **Mark A. Turdo** of the Hopewell Museum.

The evening begins with a cash bar at **6:30 PM**, followed by a **brief Annual Members Meeting**. **Guests will then enjoy a three-course dinner** with a choice of pan-seared salmon, salt brick crispy skin chicken, or braised short ribs.

Mark’s engaging presentation, **“The Drink That Fueled Colonial America,”** explores the surprising role hard cider played in early colonial life and its influence on the years leading up to the Revolutionary War.

This will be a wonderful opportunity to enjoy an exceptional meal, connect with fellow members, and experience a fascinating presentation in the charming setting of **“The Bernie” social club**.

Registration and Payment online.

Please note...seating is limited!



**The Board of Trustees is pleased to
welcome the following New Members!**

Jessica Barber	Basking Ridge, NJ	Dan Hart	Basking Ridge, NJ
Jeffrey Brown	Bernardsville, NJ	Robert Hess	Basking Ridge, NJ
Daidra Carsman	Bedminster, NJ	Sean Hunter	Mendham, NJ
Dilip Chopra	Basking Ridge, NJ	Kristen Koernig	Washington, DC
Paige Colonnese	Gladstone, NJ	Teresa Lane	Basking Ridge, NJ
Charlie DiGangi	Basking Ridge, NJ	Brendan	
Joanne Finnen	Peapack, NJ	& Donna Lenox	Bridgewater, NJ
Craig Fisk	Basking Ridge, NJ	Josh Meyers	Bernardsville, NJ
Deidre Goldstein	Bernardsville, NJ	Kevin Weaver	Basking Ridge, NJ
		Valerie Zanardi	Bernardsville, NJ

**Kidnapping the Enemy: The Special Operations to Capture
Generals Charles Lee & Richard Prescott
and
George Washington's Nemesis: The Outrageous Treason and Unfair Court-Martial
of Major General Lee During the Revolutionary War**

Presented by: Christian McBurney, author

Part of the Series – “The Capture of General Charles Lee at Widow White's Tavern and its Local Impact”

Date: Sunday, December 13

Time: 2 - 4 PM Refreshments will be served.

Location: The Brick Academy, 15 W. Oak Street, Basking Ridge

Admission: \$15 for Members / \$20 for Non-members (*Seating is Limited - Register Below*)

In celebration of our nation's 250th anniversary, step back in time to one of the Revolutionary War's most stunning turning points. Join us at Widow White's Tavern - the historic Brick Academy transformed - to mark the 250th anniversary of the capture of General Charles Lee in Basking Ridge. Acclaimed historian Christian McBurney will bring the infamous General to life, drawing from his two definitive books on the subject. McBurney will delve into the dramatic details of Lee's high-stakes capture, his controversial role at the Battle of Monmouth, and the scandalous court-martial that followed.

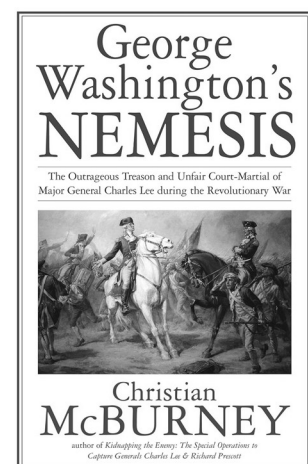
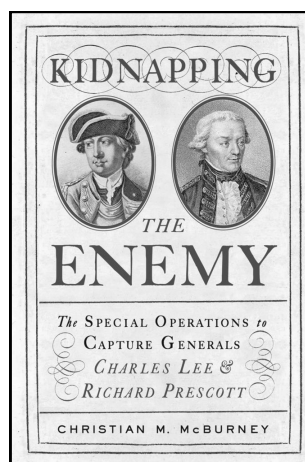
On December 13, 1776, 250 years ago during the Revolutionary War, a troop of British cavalry led by a British aristocrat, and one of the most feared British cavalry officers of the war, captured Major General Charles Lee at Widow White's Tavern in Basking Ridge. Lee was then the second-in-command of the Continental army, subordinate to only General George Washington. Lee was the most complicated, controversial, and eccentric officer on either side of the Revolutionary War.

Find out why Lee ended up at Basking Ridge and how locals assisted the British in discovering his presence. What myths arose around this event that made it to newspapers here in the US, and in England and throughout Europe. Following a long imprisonment in New York, Lee was eventually freed via a high-profile prisoner exchange in 1778 and returned to the Continental Army where he went on to command the army at the Battle of Monmouth in southern New Jersey. Thought to be unjustly charged with not attacking the enemy despite orders to do so, Lee was convicted, and suspended from the army. The president of the court martial board at the time who presided over Lee's trial was William Alexander, who called himself Lord Stirling, the owner of a large estate in Basking Ridge famously known as Stirling Manor.

It was only after his death that historians combing through British archives discovered shocking evidence that while held captive in New York, General Charles Lee had fully committed treason!

***Both books, signed by the author,
will be available for sale
for \$20 each after the presentation.***

Registration and Payment online.



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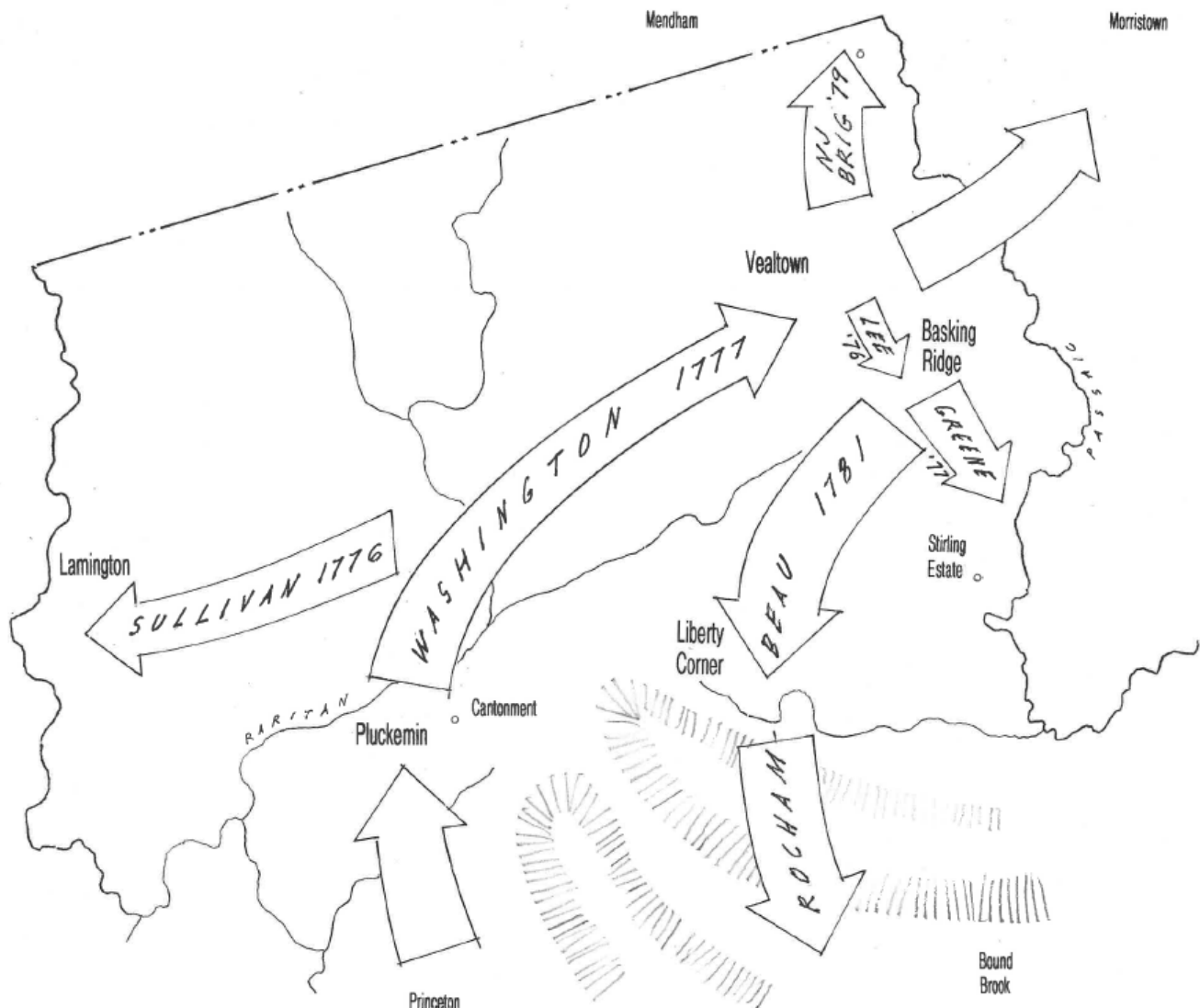
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- NJ Brigade to Vealtown - 1779

In December 1779, following Gen. John Sullivan's campaign against the Iroquois in central New York State, the New Jersey Brigade returned to New Jersey. In late December, they marched from Scotch Plains to Vealtown (Bernardsville). They moved into newly constructed huts along Hardscrabble Road on December 24 and remained there until April 1780. The road now known as "Old Army Road" connected the encampment with what today is downtown Bernardsville.

- Rochambeau to Basking Ridge and Liberty Corner - 1781

As part of the Yorktown Campaign, the French Army under Rochambeau, marched across northern New Jersey on their way south. On Aug. 29, 1781, they marched through Basking Ridge before encamping in Liberty Corner.



Cartography by Jonathan Booth

RANDOM IMAGES



Woman and Piano at Kate
Macy Ladd Home



Otto Heizmann,
Bernardsville, NJ



Bicentennial Celebration of
the Birthday of George
Washington

For more than two years, THSSH has been scanning and cataloging its collections and placing them on its online public site. Bedminster Township, Bernards Township, Bernardsville, Far Hills, and Peapack-Gladstone, NJ, are all represented. The collection includes photos, postcards, documents, books, and museum objects.

To access the collection go to <https://somersethills.catalogaccess.com/random-images>.

To view a larger image, click on the thumbnail. You can right-click to use your browser's More Tools/ Magnify Image options to see the largest image possible. For more information on an image, click on View Catalog Record. Links on the catalog record lead you to biographies, related subjects, and more.

From Random Images, you can also search for a specific subject. Click on Keyword Search on the top menu to search for surname, placename or subject (e.g., "Far Hills").

And stop back often...THSSH is always adding new records!

MUSEUM ACQUISITIONS

The Board of Trustees extends its sincere gratitude to the following patrons for their generous gifts to the Historical Society:

- Bernards Township Committee and staff photo (1959)
William J. Kearns, Basking Ridge NJ
- Bicycle license plate, historical booklet, and Bicentennial hat (1960s)
Theodore Hunt, Massachusetts
- Photographs of Bernardsville A&P (1948) and P-G students (1943)
Richard Gallo, Basking Ridge NJ
- Gladstone Branch railroad photos taken by Ralph Curcio (1970s)
Dan McFadden, Mountain Lakes NJ
- Ludlow family photos and documents,
Anne Lindaberry Lanpbear, Basking Ridge NJ

***To Our Valued Members:
Important Announcement!***

Newsletters remain one of the most effective ways for organizations to communicate with their members and local community. As a valued member, you will continue to receive our feature stories, program/event announcements, and organization news through our newsletter.

***If you no longer want to receive the printed newsletter
please email us at: info@thssh.org and let us know.***

The newsletter can always be accessed/viewed on our website at
THSSH.org/newsletters-and-books, and from our “Highlights” eMail
that is delivered to your inbox 3 times a year -
“Spring”, “Fall”, and “Winter.”



THSSH Headquarters:

15 West Oak Street, Basking Ridge, NJ 07920
908.221.1770 • www.thssh.org

Museum Hours:

First Sunday of the Month
2 - 4 PM

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Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/historicalsocietynj/>

**The Historical Society
of the Somerset Hills**

*A 501c3 nonprofit organization
founded in 1928*

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THSSH
P.O. Box 136
Basking Ridge, NJ 07920
www.thssh.org



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or complete below, make check payable to THSSH, and mail to PO Box 136, Basking Ridge NJ 07920

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Thank you for your support!

** Membership Dues and Donations are tax deductible **