

Forgotten



Victory



The Battle of Connecticut Farms (Union) June 6-7th, 1780

www.ForgottenVictory.com

The Battle of Springfield June 23rd, 1780

Issue 3 - June 2024 - Forgotten Victory Trail Newsletter

Inside- FVT Accomplishments, Commemorative Signage preserving history, Presentations, Building the trail in Millburn, Interactive mapping and more.

Our New Jersey Education Initiative

Bob Gula has taken initiative spreading education across 10 grammar schools, with over a 1,000 students instructed on the Forgotten Victory Trail history. A presentation done in historical uniform, shares a history the local children can connect with, giving them an engaging view of what happened during the American Revolutionary War.

Jockey Hollow & Morristown

Hobart Gap

Millburn

Springfield

Connecticut Farms (Union)

Elizabeth-town

British Landing Point



Accomplishments

- Conducted Forgotten Victory Trail presentation to the general public in the historic Connecticut Farms Presbyterian Church (300 feet from the intense fighting at the defile (a gorge or narrow pass between hills) on June 7, 1780).
- Educated over 500 students (16 sessions in 10 grammar schools) on the story of the Forgotten Victory Trail.
- Obtained Final Approval to install a large FVT kiosk/sign in downtown Millburn (200 yards from the "last stand" during the Battle of Springfield).
- Designed and distributed our first FVT Membership Information Brochure.
- Participated and presented in many SAR/DAR meetings, Memorial Day commemorations, and historical society events.
- Engaged local government officials and historical societies on additional planned signage in Elizabeth, Union, and Springfield.

Kean & Monmouth archeology

Exploring the revolution from a new point of view- in the ground



With the 250th anniversary of the founding of the United States coming up in 2026, our partners from Kean and Monmouth universities launched a new review of the conflicts fought in June 1780 near what is now Kean's Union campus. The role of African and Native Americans patriotic roles in New Jersey's revolution are being researched to bring out more history.

For more information view Kean.edu/news

Oliver Cromwell in Springfield

Free man African & Native American continental soldier



Little known today, a brave hero who stood with Gen. Washington as he crossed the Delaware river on Christmas night 1776, Oliver was an important spirit of the Revolution. He defended alongside other Continentals in the last stand of Springfield, embodying the "Enlightenment" ideas of Freedom, which many of Rev. Caldwell's congregation also believed in- for all people.

Washington's "Forgotten Flag"

Washington worked with Francis Hopkinson in Haddonfield, NJ to create the original US flag, which is rarely seen. Being a Mason, symbols were very important to him, which is why he chose the 6 pointed star to represent the stars the new 'constellation'. The 1777 Middlebrook camp memorial, still flies this flag.

Bonnell's 'Minutemen' Tavern

Out of the back door to Jockey Hollow, the road goes through farms, which supplied Washington's army. The tavern on the road to Pittstown was used as a headquarters for recruitment, with many men from the 2nd Regiment Hunterdon County minutemen traveling east to defend Elizabeth-town and Springfield in 1780.

View BonnellTavern.com for it's upcoming restoration & brewery.



Do you know? Histories Mysteries- A little drummer boy was said to have marched into battle in Springfield and was struck down, ending the rumbling beat of his drum, along with the end of his life. He is said to be buried in a small cemetery near the battle.



Sons of the American Revolution
West Fields Chapter Annual Meeting

Grammar School Education Initiative

2024 marked our second year on instructing 4th and 5th grade students on the history and story of the Forgotten Victory Trail. Wearing historically accurate attire, we presented students with artifacts and information on the Battles of Springfield and Connecticut Farms. We emphasized the brave sacrifices of New Jersey's American patriots and the importance of our local area during the American Revolution. Students were amazed that a battle took place right in their backyards!



Interactive mapping of site Stay Tuned!

We have kicked off a project to compile a comprehensive list of Forgotten Victory Trail historic sites in our area. The list will be used to identify potential FVT signage locations and to develop an interactive map for our website, which we are growing to capture important areas to highlight.



One Thousand+

Students have joined our Grammar School
Education Initiative, since its inception

Five Hundred

Number of students through Millburn,
Chatham, Union, Westfield, and Summit have
been instructed through the Grammar School
Education Initiative in 2024 so far.



*Example of Kiosk planned for Taylor Park

Proposal for Millburn's 'Forgotten Victory Trail' to be commemorated with Taylor Park Kiosk

Starting a trail of history markers to preserve history across New Jersey



Our first FVT large signance was fully (and unanimously) approved by the Millburn Township Committee on May 21, 2024. After a 15 minute presentation of our proposal, and a few minor questions from the Committee members, we received a round of applause from the committee and the citizens in attendance. Millburn loved what we were selling, local history and pride in our country.



We have been working with 'Crossroads of the American Revolution' on building our first kiosk, which is planned to be installed at Taylor Park in Millburn in late 2024 or Spring 2025. New Jersey saw over 600 battles and Crossroads has dedicated itself to aiding community civic engagement.



1780 Springfield, New Jersey

At the foothills of the Hoboart Gap to the Watchung Mountains, which led to Washington's encampment in Morristown and Jockey Hollow, resided a place of great "Springs and "Fields", which became Springfield. At the edge of town, Bryan's tavern, was used as Gen. Washington's headquarters, while Continental troops stayed in the pond area to protect the vital gap just up the road.

Depicted from left to right is, Continental soldier and Free man Oliver Cromwell; Col. Matthias Ogden of the 1st NJ Regiment; Rev. James Caldwell next to Gen. Marquis De Lafayette; Gen. Washington; Gen. "Scotch Willie" Maxwell; and Gen. Greene at Bryant Park near the hills of Watchung Mt. They were all involved with Springfield's defense. The monumental "Battle of Springfield" was important as it was the last stand of the north, which fought spectacularly in order to save and preserve the ideas of enlightenment and freedom envisioned by some of New Jersey's community, which supported Washington to change the British aristocrats oppressive system.

Connecticut Farms

June 7, 1780 the British set fire to the town as they made their way towards Rev. Caldwell's parsonage, where his love and wife Hannah took safety with her 2 children and 2 young nannies. Their testimony recorded in Caldwell's published investigation says enough.

A British assassin murdered her, as reported even in the British loyalist press. They reported that Mrs. Caldwell's corpse was stripped of her clothing and thrown off the bed where she was shot and instantly died. Hannah's body was removed from the house as the British army set the parsonage on fire. [New York Rivington Gazette, August 5, 1780].-The Caldwells were to be killed as her husband was labeled the "High Priest of the Rebellion" by the British. This murder took place as the town was set on fire. A terrible storm came with pounding rain, which impeded the British in the mud, sending them back to occupied Staten Island.

German Gen. Knyphausen led his British army division and auxiliary Hessians (coming from the Turkish-Mughal word "Hashish" meaning Assassin) to strike alongside the cruel British Queens Ranger Gen. Simcoe, who brutally killed many and burned down as much as he could. The aristocratic hatred for the Caldwells, the village, and the entire gang of rebels who unionized together, was adamantly clear in their own writings, known journals and existing records.

Elizabethtown

Before Hannah was shot and the church at Connecticut Farms burned, the British Royal Army brought about 5,000 soldiers from neighboring Staten Island to occupy Elizabethtown. On January 25, 1780 the British incinerated the Caldwell church in the center of town. They burned down the shops, the homes, the court house and 'the academy'. Since 1776 skirmishes and small raids had been conducted by the British. Rev. Caldwell's congregation in Elizabeth included Gov. Livingston, Abraham Clark, Elias Boudinot, president of the Continental Congress, Elias Dayton and John De Hart, among many other founding figures. The good Rev. Caldwell was assassinated on Nov. 24, 1781, at the close of the war. The assassin was hung in Westfield amid rumors he'd been bribed to kill Caldwell.



Rebuilt Springfield church

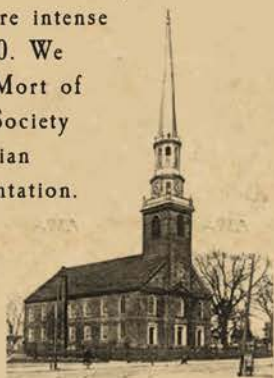


Rebuilt Union church



Connecticut Farms Presentation

John Kieser and Bob Gula presented the story of the Forgotten Victory Trail to a public gathering of over 50 people at the historic Connecticut Farms Presbyterian Church on April 7, 2024. The audience was attentive and engaged, as they were gathered a mere 100 yards from the defile (narrow pass) location where intense fighting occurred on June 7, 1780. We would like to thank Barbara La Mort of the Union Township Historical Society and Connecticut Farms Presbyterian Church for sponsoring our presentation.



In 1780, News of New Jersey's beloved Hannah Caldwell's death stirred the Minutemen to rise in a passionate force, which even Gen Washington wrote of,

"They flew to arms universally and acted with a spirit equal to anything I have seen in the course of the war."

Rebuilt in 1783 at the end of the war, the Elizabeth church, dates its origins to the founding of the town of Elizabeth in 1664. The church received its charter from King George II in 1753, along with the school next-door, called the "Academy", where 'The College of New Jersey' (Princeton) first began. Rev. Caldwell, a "new light" student of Princeton, was aligned with antislavery & the ideas of the "Age of Enlightenment", which was at it's core the "Will to Do Good".

Historical 'Victory Trail'

While some historical signs exist, there are major battles where American's were killed and are not being represented. Our initiative is to connect the full story of the "Union" that people of all kinds joined to defend from a tyrannical Imperial entity, which had come to invade, attack, and bring full burning of central Union County.

#	Revolutionary Site	Address
1	TBD - Kiosk - Veteran's Memorial Waterfront Park	Elizabeth Ave. & Front St., Elizabeth
2	Revolutionary War Cannon	2 Broad St., Elizabeth
3	Minuteman Statue	Elizabeth Ave. and High St., Elizabeth
4	St John's Episcopal Church	61 Broad St., Elizabeth
5	First Presbyterian Church of Elizabeth	42 Broad Street, Elizabeth
6	Liberty Hall	1003 Morris Avenue, Union Township
7	Sign - March to Battle of Springfield	Burnet Ave & Vauxhall Rd, Union Township
8	Sign - Washington's Hdq Connecticut Farms	Elmwood Ave & Stuyvesant Ave., Union Township
9	Sign - American Troop Withdrawal	Caldwell Ave. & Elmwood Ave. Union Township
10	Sign - British March on Vauxhall	Stuyvesant Ave. & Vauxhall Rd, Union Township
11	TBD - Kiosk - Sign - Rahway Bridge	Morris Ave & Spruce St, Union Township
12	TBD - Kiosk - Battle of Connecticut Farms - Defile	Globe Ave. & Chestnut St. Union Township
13	The Connecticut Farms Presbyterian Church and Cemetery	888 Stuyvesant Avenue, Union Township
14	TBD - Kiosk - Caldwell Parsonage	909 Caldwell Avenue, Union Township
15	Colonel Israel Angell Memorial	Washington Ave. & Morris Ave., Springfield
16	TBD - Kiosk - Cannon Ball House	126 Morris Avenue, Springfield
17	Springfield Presbyterian Church	210 Morris Ave., Springfield
18	Presbyterian Church Cemetery	37 Church Mall, Springfield
19	Battle Ground Cemetery	39 Mountain Ave., Springfield
20	Battle of Springfield Marker - Vauxhall Bridge	Millburn Ave. & Vauxhall Rd., Millburn
21	Hessian House	155 Millburn Ave., Millburn
22	Washington Rock	Crest Drive, Millburn
23	White Oak Ridge Cemetery	Parsonage Hill Rd. and White Oak Ridge Rd., Short Hills
24	TBD - Kiosk - Battle of Springfield / Downtown Millburn	Taylor St. & Main St., Millburn
25	Last British Thrust Marker	375 Millburn Ave., Millburn
26	TBD - Kiosk - Washingtons Hdq / Briants Tavern	Springfield Ave. & Briant Pk Dr., Springfield



It is said that Gen Washington on passing through Connecticut Farms, pronounced it the "Garden of New Jersey."
- History of Union County, NJ Vol II.

- Officers of the Forgotten Victory Trail
- John Kieser, President
- Bob Gula, 1st Vice President
- Rose Hilbert, Vice President & Treasurer
- Kevin Vancio, Vice President
- Steve Clark, Membership Chairman

Forgetting Hannah Caldwell?

While we are trying to preserve and protect history, there was talk in the county last year about replacing the historic Union County seal, which pictures the shooting of Hannah Caldwell by a British red coat. It's been there since incorporation in 1857. For the first time in our history, current options are to erase the memory of Hannah Caldwell. There is a reason that the entire seal for Union County was etched with this pivotal event in New Jersey and United States history. With the upcoming 250th anniversary of America in 2026 we should preserve our heritage.

- Friends of Forgotten Victory
- Barbara La Mort, President of Union Historical Society
- Linda Jurczak, President of Springfield Historical Society
- Kevin Tremble, Consultant, Washington Association of NJ
- Richard Veit, History Professor, Monmouth University
- Jonathan Mercantini, History Professor, Kean University
- Dorothy Kelly, Trustee, Millburn-Short Hills Historical Society.

