



# THE CONTINENTAL SOLDIER

*The newsletter of the Continental Line, Inc.*

## FROM THE CHAIRMAN

I want to take this opportunity to thank the membership for entrusting me with the position of Chairman of the Continental Line. The Line is currently at 80 member units plus four probationary units with the ability to field several hundred men-at-arms and hundreds more as distaff and non-military. We've been participating at events since the mid 1980's and clearly are still building. Our financial status is strong, our membership is vibrant and our impressions are always improving.

I had the opportunity to attend both of the main department events at Rock Ford and Oriskany this year and to look at them from a very different point of view. The position of Chairman is not one that runs or coordinates events but one that works with units of the Continental Line so that they can run events efficiently and with the support of the entire membership along with the British Brigade, the Brigade of the American Revolution, guest units and host sites. I was pleased to see things go so well at both events. While every site has its issues, we can certainly say that these events were well run and that our people had a good experience. We encourage other units to follow in their footsteps and bring new and interesting events to the attention of our membership. 2013 will bring two more very exciting Full Line events at Monmouth, NJ and Gloucester, VA.

As chairman I have no specific agenda to change things because that's not the role, but rather to keep things moving forward and to allow the membership to continue to thrive. We have tremendous camaraderie among our family of reenactors and we should continue to work together to make things better. When I chose to run for this position I decided to minimize one particular word from my discussions. The term 'farb' has become synonymous with someone who doesn't portray our period well. Sadly it is widespread in use and offends many. I also try to minimize the use of another word, 'progressive'. It is unfortunate that these words have become targets of distinction within our community. I never saw being progressive as a bad thing but rather a direction of progress. I personally fall someplace in the middle of these two extremes and constantly look to improve my own impression. Since research and knowledge are always advancing, we all should continue to take advantage of this new information to make upgrades to our uniform, equipment or general portrayal.

Remember that we portray members of the Continental Army and that those soldiers and civilians had lives that are fairly well docu-

mented. Unit commanders are responsible for their members and each unit should take pride in their impression. That impression should embody the souls and spirit of our predecessors and respect who they were and what they did for this country. Take a look at yourselves and ask this simple question... "Am I doing the best that I can to personify a member of the unit that I portray"? While we understand that people have personal choices, things like facial hair have always been a point of contention. If you can keep a clean shaven face, please do so or at least trim it close for events. After all, Washington ordered it. Look at your uniforms and do your best to make them fit properly. Many of those we call 'progressive' are actually very willing to help others make things look more correct, just reach out to them. I'm also asking for those who can help to please make yourselves available. We should all do our best to 'look the part'. Look to your unit commanders for help, always strive to improve your impression and remember that the Continental Line is seen by thousands through photographs and videos and is shared on social media such as Facebook and YouTube.

Another personal goal for me is to learn the names of as many of you as possible and in particular the unit commanders. While I'm sure I know most of you it is sometimes hard to remember who's who especially when not in kit. I'm currently modifying the Continental Line Commander's Contact List to include a photograph of the commanding officer for each unit. I'm gathering pictures from Facebook and unit websites. If any unit commander is interested in sending a photo please do so to [chairman@continentalline.org](mailto:chairman@continentalline.org). If you wish to have a copy of the final list, I plan to make it available by the meeting in King of Prussia, PA on January 12, 2013.

As a final comment on 'who the line is', remember that the Continental Line does not run events but rather works with member units who do run events. We are a group of units that help get the word out and coordinate and distribute information. We have only a few rules beyond that of safety guidelines because a rule is only as good as your ability to enforce it. We are volunteers with a mission - to exemplify the lives and times of the people during our War for Independence.

I look forward to continuing to serve with you in the field.

Your most obedient servant,

Bob Allegretto  
Chairman

# UPCOMING EVENTS

## JANUARY 12, 2013 » CONTINENTAL LINE

Here are lists of events within the respective departments. These lists include local events, Continental Line events, and some events which require special invitation. Those interested in participating in some of the local events or special invite events, coordinate with the respective department coordinator for the event information.

The annual Continental Line planning meeting is fast approaching. The meeting will be held at the Crown Plaza Hotel 260 Mall Boulevard in King of Prussia, PA on Saturday, January 12, 2013 from 8AM – 5PM. The cost of registration is \$45.00 per attendee which will include Saturday lunch. Please return the below form to register for the meeting by December 7, 2012. The hotel has rooms blocked for us at a special rate for both Friday and Saturday if booked before December 11, 2012. The cost of a traditional double room is \$99.00 plus tax per night. Telephone # for reservations is 610-265-7500. Be sure to let the registration desk know that you are booking for the British Brigade/Continental Line. A web link is also provided below so that registration may be made online.

<http://www.ichotelsgroup.com/crowneplaza/hotels/us/en/king-of-prussia/phlvf/hoteldetail?groupCode=BBG>

Crown Plaza Valley Forge  
260 Mall Road King of Prussia, PA  
[www.cpvalleyforge.com](http://www.cpvalleyforge.com)

### MESSAGE FROM THE EDITOR

Any feedback from the last newsletter or if you have anything you would like to have added to the newsletter, please e-mail them to me ([erick.nason.ctr@jpra.mil](mailto:erick.nason.ctr@jpra.mil)) and I will make sure it's added. AARs, up-coming events, or points of interests, send them to me and I'll get them into the newsletter.

*Erick Nason, 2nd South Carolina, Editor*

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Unit \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_ email \_\_\_\_\_

Also attending: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone# \_\_\_\_\_

Number of people attending meeting Jan 12, 2013 \_\_\_\_\_

Amount included \$45.00 X number attending \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Mail Check (by December 7, 2012)  
made out to the Continental Line to:

Janie Ritchie  
200 Waverly Rd  
N Andover MA 01845  
Questions: [najanie@aol.com](mailto:najanie@aol.com) or 978-686-2837

Don't forget to bring a donation for our raffle. Thank you

If your unit is attending and you do not know the names of the attendees, you may still register by due date. If you are not sure if your unit can attend, register and the fee will be returned if I am notified at least a week before



## AN EVENT IN NEW JERSEY'S FORT LEE

### HISTORY:

Fort Lee found its place in American history during the 1776 British campaign to control New York City and the Hudson River.

Having resisted the British siege of Boston, George Washington turned his attention to the defense of New York City and the Hudson River Valley. Besides constructing fortifications at New York and Long Island, Washington felt it imperative for the army to build and strengthen its defenses along the Hudson River.

The British plan, meanwhile, was to control the length of the Hudson with the overwhelming dominance of its Royal Navy. This plan, if successful, would split the Colonies in half—bringing an early end to the American rebellion.

In July 1776, the Americans began fortifying this site, which they first named “Fort Constitution.” (They later changed the name to “Fort Lee,” to honor General Charles Lee, whose army had achieved a major victory at Charleston, South Carolina, that summer.) On the high ground of northern Manhattan opposite Fort Lee, work had already begun on Fort Washington. On July 12, Admiral Richard Howe sent two British ships, the *Rose* and the *Phoenix*, up the Hudson. Cannon fire from Fort Washington alone had little effect on their passage; Washington ordered work on Fort Lee to advance as quickly as possible.

At General Israel Putnam’s suggestion, obstructions were sunk in the river channel between the forts. With these in place, and artillery fire from the twin forts, the Americans believed that no British ships would be able to sail past without sustaining severe losses.

The summer of 1776 went on, the largest force of British ships ever to have left English shores was amassing in New York Harbor, and by mid-August, Sir William Howe, British Commander-in-Chief (and brother to Admiral Howe), had assembled an army of over 31,000 British and Hessian troops on Staten Island.



On August 22, the British attacked Long Island and five days later forced the Americans to retreat to New York City (at the time, the city comprised only the southern tip of Manhattan Island). In September, the British took New York City and the rest of Manhattan—except for Fort Washington.

On November 16, Fort Washington fell to an overwhelming assault by Crown forces, who captured more than 3,000 American troops.

Washington realized that with the loss of Fort Washington, Fort Lee was of little military value. He ordered General Nathanael Greene, the commander at Fort Lee, to begin preparations to evacuate the fort. An orderly withdrawal, however, was not in store for the Americans...

On November 20, just four days after taking Fort Washington, General Howe ordered General Charles Cornwallis to convey 5,000 men across the Hudson several miles north of Fort Lee. When word of the advancing army reached Washington, he ordered an immediate retreat, before the Fort Lee troops could be cut off and captured by the British force. Most of the American supplies and artillery had to be left behind. These were indeed among the darkest days for the cause of American independence, leading Thomas Paine to pen his famous words, “These are the times that try men’s souls...”



## SOUTHERN DEPARTMENT EVENT

Jan. 19-20, 2013 Cowpens Anniversary Chesnee, SC

### SIEGE OF FORT MIFFLIN

In 1771, a British captain of the Royal Engineers named John Montresor was selected by Pennsylvania Governor John Penn to prepare plans for fortifying the waterborne approaches to Philadelphia. Montresor chose Mud Island because it offered protection to both the Schuylkill and Delaware Rivers.

Work began on the fort in 1772, but proceeded slowly until the outbreak of hostilities between England and the Colonies. By 1775 war seemed imminent. Attention was once again turned to the defenses along the Delaware River, and General Thomas Mifflin was charged with completing the work of "Fort Island" (as it was called at the time.)

Work on the fortification continued through 1777. Artillery batteries were setup to defend the main channel of the Delaware River, and a dockyard was built to help maintain the small flotilla of gunboats from the Pennsylvania Navy. The chevaux-de-frise was constructed at several locations along the Delaware River's main channel, and only those river pilots with the secret knowledge of these submerged obstacles could take a ship safely to or from Philadelphia.

In September of 1777 the British made their first move to breach the American river defenses. The American fortification at Billingsport, only three miles down-river from Fort Island, fell to British land forces with little resistance. The only thing that now stood between the massing British fleet and Fort Island was the Pennsylvania Navy and the chevaux-de-frise.

From September to November the British Navy worked at moving and careening the chevaux-de-frise, and despite attacks from the American gunboats, the British managed to clear a channel through which their heavier warships could pass. At the same time, British artillery from Philadelphia moved south



across Webb's Ferry and mounted batteries on Province and Carpenter's Islands. From there they were able to lay their guns on the less protected west side of Fort Island.

By November 10th the British were in a position to launch a full scale attack on Fort Island, and on November 15th a coordinated effort of both British land and naval batteries reduced the fort to ruins. What remained of the fort's garrison escaped by boat across to Fort Mercer under the cover of darkness, leaving a handful of men at the fort's few remaining guns to create a covering diversion.

On November 20th, the outnumbered American garrison at Fort Mercer withdrew ahead of the advancing British forces. The loss of Fort Island and the surrender of Fort Mercer opened the Delaware River to the British and allowed General Howe's army in Philadelphia to receive the supplies it desperately needed. However, the supplies came too late for the campaign of 1777 to continue. Winter was rapidly approaching, and a new campaign would have to wait until spring of 1778.

## COMING IN 2013

### 235th Battle of Monmouth » June 15-16 2013

350 Freehold-Englishtown Road | Freehold, NJ  
Sponsoring units: 2nd NJ and 43rd Regt. of Foot

### Gloucester Point » October 19-20 2013

4750 Warner Hall Road | Gloucester VA  
Sponsoring unit: 1st VA and 64th Regt. of Foot

POSSIBLE EVENT 2016

### 235th Battle of Cowpens » Chesney, SC

National Park service has begun coordinating with the 2nd SC concerning support of a national event at Cowpens. Looking to conduct this event similar to how the 225th was conducted. The camping will be on the national park/original site, and the fighting of the battle/scenarios on a farmer's field roughly a mile away. The National park is looking to provide logistical support for the event.

*(and yes, we finally used up all of the cartridges we made for the 225th last year)*

## BATTLE OF THE HOOK

### OCTOBER 18-20, 2013 » GLOUCESTER, VIRGINIA

EVENT HIGHLIGHTS WILL INCLUDE:

**“Big Three” Event, sanctioned by BAR, British Brigade, and the Continental Line**

**Five Battle Reenactments including the Battle of the Hook, and the attack on Redoubt 10**

**Earthworks, Boat Landings, “Campaign” Camp**

**Dusk Artillery Demonstration**

**Special Programs for Area School Children**

**Saturday evening Jollification**

**Historic Estate Close to Original Battlefield**

**Financial Assistance for Horses, Boats and Charter Buses**

PROPOSED SCHEDULE OF EVENTS:

#### Friday, October 18:

- » Participants arrive and set up camps
- » Volunteer Reenactors visit area Schools
- » 18th c. Ball or other activities for local residents

#### Saturday, October 19:

- » Troop Landing from Recreated Boats, and Skirmish
- » Music Performance by Massed Fifes and Drums
- » Military Camp Life Programs
- » Battle of the Hook Demonstration
- » Evening Artillery Demonstration
- » Storming of Redoubt 10 Demonstration
- » Jollification

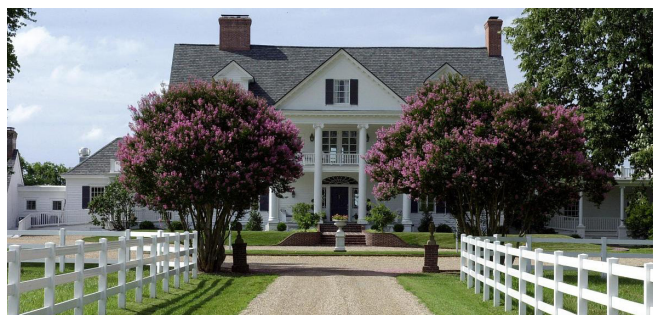
#### Sunday, October 20:

- » Morning Battle Demonstration
- » Troop Landing from Recreated Boats, and Skirmish
- » Music Performance by Massed Fifes and Drums
- » Attack on Gloucester Works & Surrender Demonstration

[www.battleofthehook.com](http://www.battleofthehook.com) | [hookbattle@aol.com](mailto:hookbattle@aol.com)



*All photos from the 2008 event, courtesy of LCDR Bob Yankle, USN (Ret.)*



### THE SITE

This is a site of major historic importance and reenactors will enjoy their visit. Warner Hall ([www.warnerhall.com](http://www.warnerhall.com)) was founded in 1642 and is listed by both the National Register of Historic Places and the Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission. Augustine Warner received the acreage in exchange for bringing twelve settlers across the Atlantic Ocean to the Jamestown Settlement. Warner Hall served for a time as Nathaniel Bacon's headquarters during "Bacon's Rebellion" in 1676.

The estate was the home of George Washington's great-grandfather Augustine Warner II, whose daughter Mildred married Lawrence Washington. George Washington was a visitor to the estate, as was Lafayette, the Duc de Lauzon, and Merriweather Lewis (who also was a descendant of Augustine). Queen Elizabeth II, also related to Augustine Warner, visited the estate in 1957.

The main house was damaged by fire in 1740 and the present structure was rebuilt in 1849 in the Colonial Revival style. The main house, along with the original 17th century west wing dependency (the plantation schoolroom and tutor's quarters) has been completely restored and offers a rare glimpse into the past. Historic outbuildings include 18th century brick stables, a dairy barn and smokehouse. The Warner-Lewis family graveyard, maintained by the Association for the Preservation of Virginia Antiquities, offers a remarkable collection of 17th and 18th century tombstones. The property includes over 500 acres, most of it farm fields.

### THE EVENT

A "Big Three" reenactment was held for the first time at Warner Hall in 2008 and was enthusiastically received by both participants and public. This latest event is also planned as a "Big Three" reenactment, to include units from the Continental Line, the British Brigade, and the Brigade of the American Revolution. Commanders of the British Brigade and the BAR have already sanctioned the event as the major event for October 18 - 20, 2013.

### FIVE BATTLES

We plan to hold reenactments of the two engagements associated with the Yorktown campaign in Gloucester County. (See history on last page.) One battle will recreate the engagement between Lauzun's Legion and Tarleton, including mounted troops and infantry. The other full battle will portray the Allies (failed) attack against the British works.

In addition to these full battles each afternoon, there will be two "opposed" boat landings in which troops will arrive in period boats, land, and engage the enemy. One day the British will land, the other day Allies will land. Not all troops will be involved in these activities each day, but we hope that all who want to participate will be able to be in a landing and/or oppose a landing.



In addition, we plan to recreate the assault on Redoubt 10 at Yorktown. We will have earthworks that can be stormed, and plan to hold this reenactment at dusk on Saturday. (As always, safety will be a key component of this activity.) This will be preceded by an artillery demonstration.

We also anticipate holding a more free-form battle Sunday morning for units and individuals interested in participating.

### OTHER ACTIVITIES

In addition to the battles, we plan to organize a variety of other activities throughout the weekend. Some of these activities will include school programs, Dragoon, Artillery & Music Demonstrations, music and dance programs, Soldiers & Ladies Jollification at Warner Hall, and more.

### HORSE / BOAT / CHARTER BUS FUND

We are happy to announce that just as in 2008, we will provide financial assistance for horses, boats, and charter buses. Any group interested in organizing a charter bus to the event



should contact the organizers for more information (e-mail: HookBattle@aol.com).

## THE BATTLE OF THE HOOK

When General Cornwallis occupied Yorktown in September 1781 he dispatched a portion of his troops to occupy and fortify Gloucester Point, across the river from Yorktown. This force would be able to secure the British Army's flank, protect a possible escape route, and forage for food and supplies in the fertile farmland of Gloucester County. Among the British forces in Gloucester were Col. Banastre Tarleton and his Legion, along with detachments from several regular British regiments.

General Washington and his French allies recognized the importance of this area to the ensuing siege and sent a force to block the British in Gloucester. This Allied force included Virginia militia, made up in part of former Continental soldiers. The French forces, under the command of General Choisy included Marines, as well as Lauzun's Legion, under the command of the flamboyant Duc de Lauzun.



Early on the morning of 3 October, Captain Phil Taliaferro of the Gloucester militia sent the following dispatch, probably from the militia's observation post at Perrin's (Little England), to the Allied commanders in Gloucester who were moving south from the vicinity of the Court House toward the enemy positions at Gloucester Point.

*A party of the Enemy are now At Mrs Whitings & have sent out to collect the Cattle & Sheep adjacent, there being no one to oppose them. I thought proper to send this information to you & am with respect Your Most Obedt. Serv't.*

Phil Taliaferro  
Octr. 3. 1781

Lauzun linked up with Mercer at Seawell's Tavern, about five miles from the British positions, and they continued toward the enemy. When they met the British a couple of miles down the road at "the Hook" (where the Guinea Road now meets Route 17), Lauzun rode up and spotted Tarleton galloping toward him. Before they clashed, one of Tarleton's cavalrymen's horses was wounded, and it struck Tarleton's, felling him and his horse in the process. His dragoons rescued him, retreated, then reformed and counterattacked, as Mercer was called for-

ward. Mercer dismounted and led his grenadiers into battle at a run. As the French cavalry withdrew through him to reform, Mercer's men drove the British Legion off, and forced Tarleton to withdraw.

The British withdrew to their lines with the loss of their infantry commander and 12 men, and a wounded Colonel Tarleton. The Americans lost 2 killed and 11 wounded, and the French suffered 3 killed and 16 wounded, including Lauzun's second-in-command.

General Choisy penned the following to General Washington (his own spelling is used):

*Obre 3th after noon at 2 o Clock  
Sir,*

*I have the hounor to inform you that by our arrival at Saoul's Tavern we have met with the ennemi who was in number about 500 men Cavalry and Infantry, that the Cavalry of the Duc of Lauzun has attaqued them, pierced throug and that we have had a great advantage on them We can esteem they have 30 men killed or wounded The 200 men grenadier Americans who were the only Infantry advanced enough to have part in the affair and who have behaved exceedingly well have killed one officer who was at the head of the Infantry of the ennemi. T'is a general report that Tarleton has been wounded. The ennemi have retired to Gloucester and we are quickly in our Camp where I expect you will join to morrow as we have al. agreed*

*I have the hounor to be your Most humble servant,  
Choisy*

General Washington's general orders of the next day included the following:

*... the General Congratulates the Army upon the brilliant success of the Allied Troops near Gloucester. He requests the Duke de Lauzern to accept his particular thanks for the Judicious disposition and the decisive Vigour with which he charged the Enemy, and to communicate his Warmest Acknowledgements to the Gallant Officers and men by whom he was so admirably seconded. He feels peculiar satisfaction at the inconsiderable loss on our part, that no ill effects are to be apprehended from the Honorable Wounds which have been received in this affair, and that at so small an Expence, the Enemy amounting to six hundred Horse and foot were compleatly repulsed and Reconducted to their very lines.*

Days later the Allies attempted to storm and seize the British works in Gloucester, but after a sharp engagement, they were forced to pull back. However, the British forces were no longer able to forage in Gloucester County.



**The Continental Soldier Newsletter**

934 County Road N | Stoughton, WI 53589

