

Washington Crossing

Historic Park Trail



Washington Crossing Historic Park
P.O. Box 103
Washington Crossing, PA 18977
215-493-4076
www.ushistory.org/washingtoncrossing



Boy Scouts of America
Washington Crossing Council, BSA
Washington Crossing Trail
One Scout Way
Doylestown, PA 18901
Phone: 215-348-7205
Fax: 215-348-7289

Dear Unit Leader:

The Washington Crossing Council, Boy Scouts of America, sponsor the Washington Crossing Historical Trail, in cooperation with Washington Crossing Historic Park. Use of the trail is an inspiring, educational experience of interest to people of all ages. Preparation for the trail hike and participation in the trail schedule help to develop an understanding of the significance of the crossing of the Delaware in our nation's history. Through familiarization with historic buildings in the park, the conservation efforts in Bowman's Hill State Wildflower Preserve, and the preservation of the Delaware Canal, Scouting programs in citizenship, conservation and historic heritage are reinforced.

The 8.6 miles of trail may be covered in one eight-hour day. A commemorative patch and medal are available. The value of the Washington Crossing Trail experience is in direct proportion to the amount of preparation provided by the leadership of the participating group.

We encourage Scouting units to take part in this historic trail hike and award program.

Yours in Scouting,

Washington Crossing Council
Boy Scouts of America

Please read all material carefully. Note that reservations for camping at Washington Crossing Historic Park are secured directly from the park (215-493-4076 or visit their website at:

www.ushistory.org/washingtoncrossing

Reservations to camp at Ockanickon Scout Reservation are made w/ the Washington Crossing Council, B.S.A.

PLEASE USE TOWPATH FOR SAFETY REASONS.

Tours of the lower park and the Thompson-Neely House are available Thursday through Sunday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. for \$5 each. Bowman's Hill Tower is open Tuesday through Sunday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. for \$5. A discounted combination ticket for all three locations is available for \$9. Tickets may be purchased at any of the three locations.

For tours larger than 15 people, call 215-493-4076 to make a reservation. Complimentary tickets are provided to active duty military personnel and children under the age of four. Individuals with disabilities who need special assistance or accommodations should call 215-493-4076.

Restrooms are available at the temporary Visitor Center.

WASHINGTON CROSSING HISTORICAL PARK INFORMATION

Washington Crossing Historic Park is administered by the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission.

Leader's Responsibility: Unit leaders are responsible for the conduct and behavior of ALL Unit participants on park property. Please observe good sanitation and safety practices, dispose of trash properly and observe all Park regulations. All emergencies must be reported to the Park Ranger, and/or Park Office, and to the Washington Crossing Council, BSA, relating incidents, dates, times and actions taken.

AREA INFORMATION:

EMERGENCIES: Dial 911

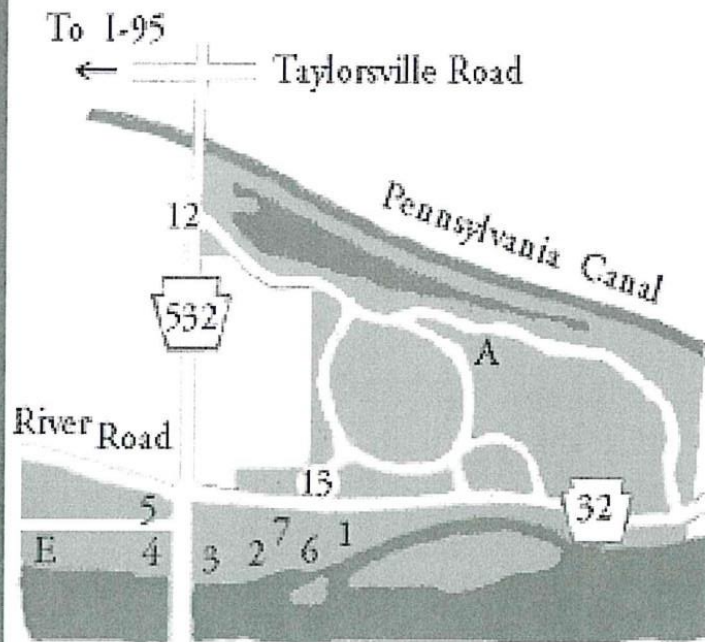
HOSPITALS: St. Mary's Hospital, Route 413, 2 miles south of Newtown, Pa. ER 215-750-2100
Doylestown Hospital, route 202, 1 mile west of Doylestown, Pa. ER215-345-2200
Delaware Valley Medical Center, 200 Oxford Valley Rd. Langhorne, Pa. ER 215-949-5260
Mercer Medical Center, Trenton, N.J. ER 609-394-4000

CHURCHES: St. Ignatius R.C. Church, Reading Ave., Yardley, Pa. 215-493-3377
St. Martin's R.C. Church, New St., New Hope, Pa. 215-862-5472
Thompson Memorial Presbyterian Church, Aquetong Rd., New Hope, Pa. 215-579-0445
Ascension Lutheran Church, Titusville, NJ.
St. Andrew's Episcopal Church, W. Afton Ave., Yardley, Pa. 215-493-2636

For other local information, ask the Park Staff at the Visitor's Center.

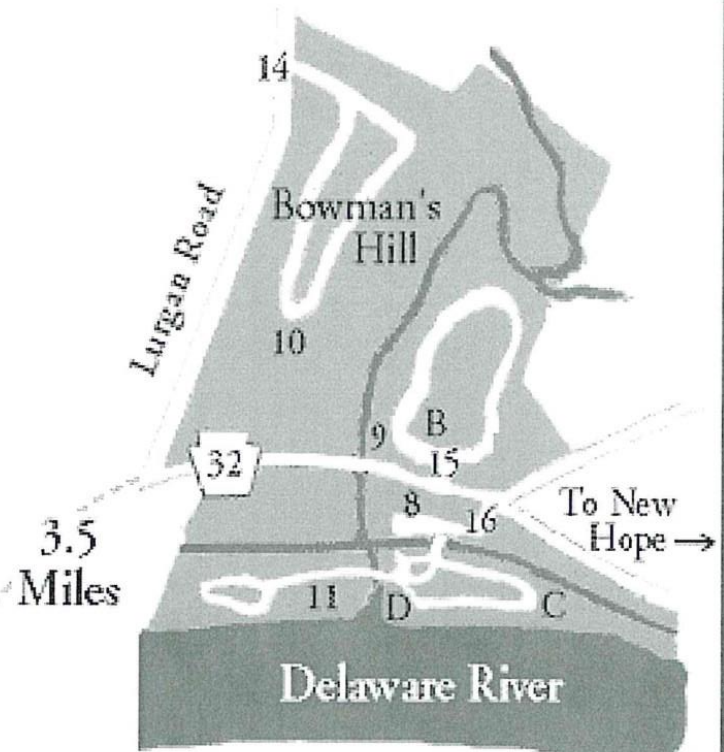


WASHINGTON CROSSING HISTORIC PARK



McConkey's Ferry Section

1. Visitors Center
2. Durham Boat House
3. McConkey's Ferry Inn
4. Mahlon K. Taylor House
5. Taylorville Store
6. Hibbs House
7. Blacksmith's House
8. Thompson-Neely House
9. Thompson-Neely Grist Mill



Thompson's Mill Section

10. Bowman's Hill Tower
 11. Soldiers' Graves
 12. Newtown Gate
 13. Flagpole Gate
 14. Tower Gate
 15. West Gate
 16. Thompson-Neely Gate
- A, B, C, D, E - Picnic Pavilions

Directions

The park is located at Washington Crossing on PA Route 32 just a few miles north of I-95, and seven miles south of New Hope, PA.

Park Hours

Tuesday - Saturday: 9:00 am - 5:00 pm

Sunday: Noon

Closed certain holidays and Mondays

Admission is charged

Washington Crossing Historic Trail--Trail Guide & Questions

Group name: _____ From: _____ # of Hikers: _____
(Troop, pack, post) (Council, Town, State)

After seeing the film presentation and taking a tour, if possible, the group should discuss the reasons for the American war for Independence, the people who participated in the Campaign of 1776, and the events leading to Washington's retreat across New York and New Jersey to Pennsylvania in December 1776. The group should be able to answer the following questions while listening to the Tour Guide and following the map and directions in this trail guide:

1. List the main reasons for the revolt from Great Britain:
2. George Washington had only recently assumed command of the army. How old was George Washington when he encamped here in 1776?
3. The American army consisted of various types of units from the 13 original colonies. Many enlistments of these soldiers, in 1776, were due to run out when?
4. The total number of men that Washington had under his command in early December in Pennsylvania was approximately how many?
5. The bulk of the British army returned to New Brunswick, New Jersey and prepared to go into "winter quarters". Why did armies of that time do this?
6. General Howe left some of the Hessian Mercenary Force, under command of General Rall in Trenton. Who were these soldiers and why were they involved?
7. Once Washington realized that the British were not going to cross the Delaware River to chase him that winter, he could have pulled the rest of his troops into Philadelphia for "winter quarters".
 - a) Why did he insist on fortifying and occupying the riverbank from New Hope to Bristol?
 - b) Why did he need to attempt a counter-strike?
 - a)

b)

8. Who was the artist who painted the famous image of Washington "Crossing of Delaware in 1881?
9. The artist wished to paint a "heroic" picture of the Crossing. Realize that the crossing took place at night and the boats nor the river, looked like this. Look at the faces of the men in this "heroic portrait." What emotions do you see?
10. What kind of boat was primarily used in the Dec. 1776 crossing and what was it normally used for?
11. Washington's original plan called for troops to cross at most of the Delaware ferries, some higher up the river, some lower down the river, at Morrisville--Trenton and below Trenton, Bristol-Burlington. The bulk of the army was to cross at this ferry.

a) Why do you suppose this site was chosen?

b) What factors would you consider if you were General Washington?

12. When did the actual crossing take place, and under what conditions?
13.
 - a) How far did the army have to go after it crossed to fight the Battle of Trenton?
 - b) How fast do you hike?
 - c) If you took a ferry across the Delaware River right now, and walked to the Trenton Barracks, how long would it take you?

a)

b)

c)

14. After the tour, take a compass sighting from the rock at the back of the Memorial Building, to the cement landing in New Jersey. What is the heading and estimate how far it is.

- Go north to the break in the split rail fence and carefully cross River Road. Designate 2 scouts to walk to the flagpole and answer question 19. You have completed 1 mile.***

- You may need your Tour Guide's help when answering some of the following Towpath questions:**

- 5

21. What kind of boats were used? Describe them.
22. How far does the towpath go if one were to hike it from end to end?

At about mile 4 ½, visit the soldier's graves area (large flagpole near the river just before the Pidcock Creek dam). Answer the questions, go back to the canal towpath and hike across the dam--temporary footbridge below. Cross the canal footbridge, visit the Thompson-Neely House. Be sure to pass under the Rt. 32 Pidcock Creek Bridge to access the Bowman's Hill area of the park and to return to the scout camping area.

23. When did Captain Moore Die?
24. What was the major cause of death to soldiers at the time of the American Revolution?
25. a) Who built the oldest part of the Thompson-Neely House? b) About when?
- a) b)
26. What parts of the house could have been visited by George Washington?
27. Who were the famous people that stayed here in December 1776?
28. a) What is so special about the architecture of this house? b) What does it show about progress and prosperity of a family in America?
- a) b)

(Tour Guide may need to provide more information regarding any Preserve questions – answer as many as possible).

Hike to the Wildflower Preserve passing under the bridge and through the deer fence gate. Follow the fence to the driveway westward to the Preserve Building.

29. a) What is the purpose of the large fence? b) Why was this necessary?
- a)

b)

30. Why was the Wildflower Preserve established?

31. a) After you have visited the Preserve's headquarters tell approximately how many species of endangered wildflowers/plantings are protected at the Wildflower Preserve?
b) Name ten common trees found here.

a)

- | | | | |
|-------|-----|----|----|
| b) 1. | 2. | 3. | 4. |
| 5. | 6. | 7. | 8. |
| 9. | 10. | | |

From the Preserve Building, go west down the hill to the creek; turn right to the bridge over Pidcock Creek. Turn left and follow the road up the hill, passing through the Deer Fence gate, turn left, and hike along the fence at the side of the hill to mile mark 7. Turn right and hike up the steep side of Bowman's Hill following the trail markings. At the top, visit the tower. Exit down the right fork traffic road, staying to the left facing traffic. Find the graveyard and answer these questions. (Handicapped access is up the old road).

32. a) Why do you think this hillside is so steep? b) Did you find the Pidcock family graveyard?

a)

b)

33. a) If the top of the tower is 128 feet high, how high above the Delaware River is a person at the top of the tower? b) How many feet in elevation have you gone up since you crossed the canal bridge?

a)

b)

The trail goes down the "up traffic road" back to the deer fence. Re-trace your steps to the Preserve Bridge. Cross over and turn right following the Creek and the path along the Mill race. Exit the deer fence at the corner and visit the mill building, if it's operating, take the tour.

34. a) Why would Pidcock Creek be a good spot for a mill?
b) Was this building here when Washington crossed the Delaware?

a)

b)

Re-enter the Preserve gate and cross back UNDER the Route 32 Bridge and proceed to the scout camping area across the canal to the north end of the Thompson-Neely area. DO NOT CROSS ROUTE 32 - THERE IS NO PEDESTRIAN CROSSWALK!

35. List the things that would be important to you if you had to camp in this site as a young soldier in Washington's army in December 1776.
36. a) If Washington asked for volunteers to follow him across the freezing Delaware, at night, during a sleet storm, in a small boat, to land, march 9 miles, and then fight a battle when you were soaking wet and cold; to possibly be cut off from your supplies, and wiped out by a superiorly trained European army of regulars, would you volunteer?
b) What would you think of him?
- a)
- b)
37. If you had followed him and won the Battle of Trenton, and crossed back into Pennsylvania safely, would you have followed him **AGAIN**, back across the river in an even **WORSE** crossing to confront the reinforcements sent from Princeton, coming to Trenton?

Study the second Battle of Trenton and the Battle of Princeton if you wish to follow George Washington's further exploits. Thank you for hiking our trail and answering the questions. A score of 75% correct by the group will merit the medal/emblem. Total length of the trail is approximately 8 ½ miles. The lower park section is 2 miles to the towpath by the lagoon. The hike to the upper recreational area--to the Route 32 underpass at the Thompson-Neely House is 3 miles (5 miles total). The hike through the WFP to the tower and back is 3 miles (8 miles total). From the bridge to the Scout camping area is an additional ½ mile (8 ½ miles total).

WASHINGTON CROSSING HISTORIC PARK--BUILDINGS/AREAS

Washington Crossing Historic Park was established in 1917 to memorialize and honor the courageous acts of the tiny and bedraggled Continental Army. Under the command of George Washington, who, in a desperate gamble, on Christmas night 1776, crossed the ice-clogged Delaware into the British occupied province of New Jersey and at Trenton victoriously routed the King's Hessian troops. This victory, miraculously almost without casualties on the American side, restored life to the dying revolutionary cause and marked the beginning of the long series of campaigns of march and counter-march which ended at Yorktown.

George Washington crossed the Delaware River at McConkey's Ferry three times; his most famous crossing was on the night of December 25, 1776, when he staked the very existence of the army and the revolutionary cause on one "all or nothing" venture. At about noon on December 26, 1776, he returned from Trenton in triumph. December 30, 1776 he re-crossed to New Jersey to continue at Trenton and Princeton, the campaigns that led eventually to victory and peace.

The park is geographically divided into two sections: the Lower Park at the McConkey's Ferry area, and the Upper Section which straddles Pidcock Creek near the Thompson-Neely House and Mill, and the Bowman's Hill Tower. Access to the Upper Park can be by vehicle along Rt. 32, or by walking the segment of the Delaware Canal State Park--towpath canal trail--that also connects the two sections.

THE LOWER PARK: McCONKEY'S FERRY SECTION

The Memorial Building/Visitor's Center

Houses the site's museum shop, orientation movie, and amenities.

The Durham Boats

In the barn building beside the McConkey's Ferry Inn are reproductions of Durham boats, a type of shallow draft river craft developed to carry pig iron from the Upper Bucks County iron furnaces to Philadelphia. It was in boats such as these together with flat boats and ferry boats (handled by experienced river men and the sailors of Glover's Marblehead Regiment) that the crossings were made.

Taylor Village

Benjamin Taylor bought the Ferry Inn and all of McConkey's riverfront property in 1777. During his long lifetime he added to and re-modeled the inn and built the stuccoed white houses on Washington Memorial Blvd. (Rt. 532) and River Rd. (Gravel path) as homes for his children and grandchildren. The fortuitous preservation of this crossroads village has given us a perfect background for the display of furnishings, household skills, and crafts and trades typical of the area in the period 1830-1835.

Taylorville was prosperous under the guidance of Benjamin's sons -- Bernard and Mahlon.

McConkey's Ferry Inn

The McConkey's Ferry Inn (originally Baker) was erected in 1752 as a house "For entertainment and more Expediting of Travelers." In December 1776, it was the property of Samuel McConkey with his tenant James Brown as innkeeper. On December 9th General Washington ordered that earthworks to defend the Ferry against attack should be erected and that troops under the command of General Adam Stephen

should patrol this portion of the riverbank. At 2pm on December 25, 1776 the army paraded along the Newtown Rd. (Rt. 532) about a mile west of the Inn. Beginning at sunset the troops marched down to the river to meet the Durham boats. General Washington arrived at the Inn about 6pm and according to tradition ate his dinner. At 11pm a northeast wind brought snow and hail to the area and the crossing was not completed until 3am on the 26th, three hours behind schedule.

At about noon on December 26th following its amazing victory, the Continental Army with its prisoners and booty began its return from Trenton to McConkey's Ferry. the boatmen worked well into the evening bringing the tired troops back. Nine hundred Hessian prisoners were marched to confinement in Newtown and twenty-three Hessian officers were locked up for the night in one of the bedrooms of the McConkey Inn. The First City Troop was finally withdrawn to the Pennsylvania side after dark, they had remained there and when on December 30th, the Continental Army returned to New Jersey, General Washington and his forces again made use of the McConkey Ferry Inn. The inn was added onto twice during the late 18th/early 19th centuries to bring it to its current appearance.

THE UPPER PARK

Soldier's Graves

During the month before the crossing many soldiers of the continental Army died of camp fever (typhus), malnutrition and the other diseases so typical of eighteenth century army life. An unknown number of these men were buried on the riverbank in the Thompson's south meadow. Only Captain James Moore had the honor of a gravestone, the names and number of the rest are unknown. A stone parapet and flagpole mark their gravesites.

The Thompson-Neely House

The earliest parts of the house were built by John Simpson, a Quaker Miller. From about 1740 until her death in 1803, the house was the home of Hannah Delaplaine Simpson Thompson. Robert Thompson and Hannah built the east wing of the house in 1757 more than doubling its size. In December 1776 Robert and Hannah Thompson and their daughter and son-in-law, Elizabeth and William Neely were living in the house. The home was used as a Military Hospital during the Revolution.

After John Simpson's death, Hannah married Robert Thompson, a journeyman miller employed by her deceased husband.

On December 12, 1776, General Washington ordered that General William Alexander (Lord Stirling) should, "take post at and below Coryeils" Lord Stirling requisitioned the Thompson-Neely house as his headquarters and moved in with his staff which included Captain William Washington, Captain James Moore of the Colony Company of Artillery of New York and 18 year old James Monroe, later the 5th President of the United States. Moore died of camp fever on December 25, 1776 and Captain William Washington and James Monroe were among the few Americans wounded at the battle of Trenton who convalesced there. For two weeks units of the Continental Army were camped in and around the Thompson property, and the mill on Pidcock Creek ground what grain was available to provide rations. On the afternoon of December 25, 1776, the troops and officers marched away from the Thompson Mill never to return. Elizabeth Neely remembered in old age that early next morning they could hear the sound of artillery fire toward Trenton and that by noon they knew that a great victory had been won.

About 1787 Robert and Hannah Thompson added the west wing of the house as a sort of apartment for themselves away from the younger generations. More openly planned and more finely furnished than the older sections, it brought the architectural history of the house to an elegant conclusion.

The immediate outbuildings of the house, the smokehouse and the icehouse are original. The barn and wagon sheds were rebuilt on their old foundations. The cooper shop has been rebuilt near its old site, as were the chicken house and corncrib. From maps, inventories and old letters we know that in addition to

the above there were also a store, a distillery, a pigsty, a barrack (hay mow with an adjustable roof), a sawyer's house, a miller's house and a plaster mill.

Bowman's Hill State Wildflower Preserve

Bowman's Hill State Wildflower Preserve was established in 1934 as a "living memorial to the valiant patriots of Washington's army". The plant material is limited to notable Pennsylvania native trees, shrubs, vines and flowering plants as well as some examples of outstanding introduced plants. The 100-acre preserve is a natural area of wild stands and contrived plantings in a naturalistic setting. Floral display is concentrated on 26 trails and areas centered around the Pidcock creek valley.

Horticultural management of the preserve is under the direction of the Bowman's Hill Wildflower Preserve Association, Inc., a volunteer organization working with the State agency, and Park Commission. Flowering begins in April and continues until the arrival of cold weather in late fall. Educational activities such as lectures, classes, guided tours and demonstrations are provided upon request. **215-862-2924**

Bowman's Hill Tower

Think of the valleys and hills as almost treeless and the trees that do exist, bare of leaves. A lookout on the top of Bowman's Hill in December of 1776 could have observed the east bank of the Delaware from near McConkey's Ferry to above Coryell's Ferry (New Hope) and seen any movement by the British troops.

In 1980 it was decided to memorialize the site of this lookout by erecting an observation tower on the spot and an elevator was installed. The tower, 125 feet high, and commands a magnificent view of the valley now greener and more picturesque than it was in 1776.

Geologically, the hill is the remains of an extinct volcano, which is why it seems so steep, and a small family graveyard of the Pidcock family can be located along the North Slope, at the top. The entrance to the old copper mine was covered in the 1920's, and where it was, is no longer known.

The Neely Mill

We know that at his death in 1747, John Simpson operated a gristmill on his lands on Pidcock Creek and that he was part owner of a saw mill. We know that Robert Thompson ground flour for the Continental Army in 1776 and that in subsequent years he had a saw mill and a plaster mill. The construction of the Pennsylvania Canal in 1827 raised the level of Pidcock Creek so far that the gristmill was put out of operation. Mr. Thompson received \$8,000. Damages from the Canal Company and built the present structure to the west of River Road.

The mill suffered a disastrous fire in 1873 and at some subsequent time a turbine was installed in place of the wheel. The mill went out of operation in 1910. Archaeological evidence has made it possible for us to restore the mill to its original state, as built in 1827, employing wheel, stones, gears, etc., similar to those which would have been in Robert Thompson's mill in the year 1776.

The Delaware Canal

(Due to recent flooding, please call ahead of time to see what parts are closed or have reopened)
Delaware Canal State Park office (610) 982-5560

The Delaware Canal and its connecting link, the Lehigh Canal was constructed between 1817 and 1830 and was in continuous operation until 1930. Also called Roosevelt State Park, this park stretches over 130 miles from Easton to Bristol along the Delaware River. A major commercial link in the last century, this canal transported coal, stone, lumber, agricultural produce, and later manufactured products from Central Pennsylvania, the Lehigh Valley, and upper Bucks County to urban rail and shipping centers in Philadelphia and Trenton. Cargo was carried on mule drawn barges, many over 40 feet long, ten feet wide and 5 feet deep. The Washington Crossing Trail passes many characteristic canal bridges, locks, aqua ducts, and

feeder dams that should allow for discussions of this technological treasure. For more information on the canal contact Roosevelt Park: 610-982-5560.

Washington Crossing Council
One Scout Way
Doylestown, PA
Phone: 215-348-7205 Fax: 215-348-7289

HISTORIC TRAIL MEDALS, & PATCHES

Washington Crossing

TOTAL

Medals - \$6.00/ea. _____ Emblems \$2.75/ea. _____

William Penn Trail

Medals - \$6.00/ea. _____ Emblems \$2.75/ea. _____

GRAND TOTAL _____

Handling Charge: \$ 2.50

Actual Shipping Charge (will be determined): _____

Total Due: _____

CREDIT CARD: VISA, DISCOVER & MASTERCARD ONLY

Credit Card: _____ **Exp. Date:** _____ **Security Code:** _____

Name as it appears on card: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ **State:** _____ **Zip Code:** _____

Home Phone: _____ **Cell Phone:** _____

DATE SENT: _____