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Northeast Region
U.S. Department of the Interior

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NATIONAL PARK SERVICE TO HOLD SYMPOSIUM OF WASHINGTON-ROCHAMBEAU SCHOLARS AT WEST POINT

The National Park Service invites the public to a Scholar's Symposium for the Washington-Rochambeau Revolutionary Route Study. A cast of internationally renowned historians will present their insights on the significance of the proposed National Historic Trail at the US Military Academy, West Point, New York on Saturday, June 15, 2002. The free program will run from 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM in the Academy's Thayer Hall Auditorium, Room 144.

Scholars will open the symposium with individual presentations that assess, from their own points of view, the NPS draft statement of national significance for the route. Following a lunch break, the group will reassemble at 2:00 for a panel discussion and question & answer period.

The event is part of the NPS study to determine whether the route is eligible for designation as a National Historic Trail. Findings from this gathering may become part of the study's submission to the NPS Advisory Board. The Advisory Board makes recommendations on the national significance of places and events, one of three criteria for trail designation.

Participating historians are (in alphabetical order):

Rene Chartrand, author and historical consultant. Mr. Chartrand served as Senior Curator with Canada's National Historic Sites for nearly thirty years and has been working as a freelance writer and consultant since his retirement. Mr. Chartrand is best known for his many publications with Osprey Books, among them *The French Army in the American War of Independence* (Osprey, 1991); *The French soldier in Colonial America* (Bloomfield, 1984), and *Louis XV's Army* vols. 1 to 3 (1997). Most recently he has published *Louisbourg 1758: Wolfe's first siege* (Osprey, 2000) and *Ticonderoga 1758: Montcalm's victory against all odds* (Osprey 2002, 2000). He is also the co-author of *Colonial American troops, 1670-1774* vols. 1 and 2 (Osprey, 2002).

Dr. Harry Dickinson, the Robert Lodge Professor of British History at the University of Edinburgh, Scotland. In his long and distinguished career, Dr. Dickinson has authored six books, among them *The Politics of the People in Eighteenth Century Britain* (1995) and edited six more, among them most recently *Britain and the American Revolution* (1998). He is the author of numerous pamphlets, contributions to books, articles, and reviews in journals. His work has been published in Britain, USA, France, Germany, Netherlands, Italy, Argentina, China, and Japan. He currently serves as Associate Editor to the *New Dictionary of National Biography* for politicians and radicals in the last third of the 18th century, where he is also a contributor of essays, and editor of the forthcoming *Blackwell Companion to Eighteenth-Century Britain*.

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General Gilbert Forray, author and researcher of military history. General Forray retired as Chief of the Army Staff of the French Army in 1991 after a distinguished career that spanned four decades. He studied at the Saint-Cyr Military Academy and attended the General Staff College in Paris. He was later Commanding General of the Coëtquidan Schools. Upon his retirement he was the Great Chancellor of the Order of the Légion d'Honneur from 1992 to 1998. The General has been awarded the Grande Croix de la Légion d'Honneur, and he is also an Officier de l'Ordre National du Mérite.

Dr. Sarah Purcell, Assistant Professor, Department of History, Grinnell College, Grinnell, Iowa. Dr. Purcell received her Ph.D. in American history from Brown University in 1997. Her dissertation was recently published under the title *Sealed with Blood: National Identity and Public Memory of the Revolutionary War, 1775-1825*, by the University of Pennsylvania Press (2002). Among her other publications are the *Encyclopedia of Battles in North America, 1517 to 1916* (Checkmark Books, 2000) and *Who was who in the American Revolution* (Gramercy Books, 1999, 1993), which she published together with L. Edward Purcell.

Dr. Robert A. Selig, Holland, Michigan; project historian for the NPS study. Dr. Selig received his Ph.D. in history from the University of Würzburg in Germany. Among his publications are a translation and edition of Johann Ewald's *Treatise on Partisan Warfare (1785)* published in 1991, and about 75 articles both in learned journals such as the *William and Mary Quarterly* as well as in popular history magazines such as *American Heritage* and *Colonial Williamsburg*. Dr. Selig has been involved with the Washington-Rochambeau Revolutionary Route Committee since its inception and has conducted the architectural and historical research, and resource surveys for the states of Connecticut and New York.

For additional information on the NPS study, see <http://www.nps.gov/revwar/links.htm> or contact the project manager at Brian_Aviles@nps.gov or (617) 223-5319. For information on West Point, call (845) 938-4011 or see <http://www.usma.edu/>.

French General Jean Baptiste Donatien de Vimeur, Comte de Rochambeau, sailed into Newport in July of 1780 with an army of 5,300 officers and men. After wintering in Newport, Rochambeau's army marched through Rhode Island and Connecticut, in June and July of 1781, and joined General George Washington's Continental Army in Philipsburg, New York.

Abandoning the idea of attacking New York, held by the British under General Clinton, they devised instead a southern campaign to attack General Cornwallis in Virginia. In August and September, Washington's and Rochambeau's armies marched through New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, and Virginia, reaching Williamsburg in late September. Together they attacked and held under siege the British-fortified town of Yorktown. A French fleet under the command of Admiral De Grasse, blocked the Chesapeake Bay to either reinforcement from New York or sea escape from Yorktown. On October 19, 1781, after three weeks of siege, General Cornwallis surrendered to General Washington, marking Yorktown as one of the most decisive American victories in the War for Independence.

Shortly afterwards, Washington and the Continentals returned to defend northern posts. Rochambeau and his army wintered in Williamsburg, then marched back in the summer of 1782. While small contingents stayed in different ports and left for France the following year, the bulk of Rochambeau's army sailed from Boston on Christmas Eve 1782.

In all, nine states formed the route and supported the march, providing ports, roads, camp sites, officers' lodging, provisions of food and supplies: Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, Massachusetts, and the District of Columbia.

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