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Morristown National Historical Park News Release

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July 4th *Revolutionary Times* Activity: Grand Re-Opening of Fort Nonsense

2 pm, July 4, 2014; At the top of Fort Nonsense (Park entrance on Chestnut Street, near intersection with Ann Street), Morristown, New Jersey

Morristown, NJ – Please join Morristown National Historical Park (NHP) and the Washington Association of New Jersey (WANJ) as they proudly “re-open” the new and improved Fort Nonsense Area. At 2 pm on July 4th, Morristown NHP Superintendent Tom Ross will be joined by Washington Association of New Jersey President Eileen Cameron and Morristown Mayor Timothy P. Dougherty for a ribbon-cutting ceremony that showcases the results of a successful public-private partnership. After the ribbon-cutting ceremony, a walking tour of Fort Nonsense will be offered by Park Ranger/Historian Eric Olsen.

The Fort Nonsense area, due to its elevation, was hit hard by Hurricane Sandy leaving a significant amount of fallen tree debris and other damage to the site. Although the site was re-opened after the roads were cleared of debris and the area was made safe, the impact of the damage was still very visible. Fortunately, through the support of the WANJ, the park has not only cleaned up the tree damage, but also has vastly improved the site for the public.

The rehabilitation of the site includes clean-up of the tree debris; new road guide and entrance sign which will aid visitors in finding the site, as well as the replacement of worn and damaged interpretive signs explaining the history of the fort and its strategic importance. In addition, new benches, picnic tables, and animal-proof trash cans have been installed for the use and comfort of visitors. All of the improvements for Fort Nonsense were purchased through a Fort Nonsense endowment fund that is managed by Morristown NHP’s private partner, the Washington Association of New Jersey.

Attracted by Morristown, New Jersey’s strategic location, General George Washington twice chose it as the site of the main Continental Army’s winter encampment of the War for Independence. Morristown NHP includes Fort Nonsense, the location of the fortification from the 1777 encampment, Washington’s Headquarters; Jockey Hollow and the New Jersey Brigade Areas, which encompass most of the ground occupied by the army during the vast 1779–80 encampment. Fort Nonsense, or the “Upper Redoubt” as Washington called it, was built at the end of the 1777 winter encampment, when the army was getting ready to leave Morristown. It provided a place of refuge for the guards who would be left behind to protect the army storehouses. To learn the origin of the name “Fort Nonsense,” join Ranger Eric Olsen’s tour on July 4th.

Fort Nonsense offers sweeping views of Morristown and eastward towards New York City - on a clear weather day the Manhattan skyline can be seen on the horizon. It is the only designated picnic area in the park and offers a serene respite from the hustle and bustle of nearby downtown Morristown. Fort Nonsense is open year round and is currently on its summer seasonal schedule of 8 am to 8 pm daily. For more information about Morristown NHP please visit our website at www.nps.gov/morr or call 973-539-2016 x 210.

The grand re-opening of Fort Nonsense is part of Morris County, New Jersey's July 4th festivities, *Revolutionary Times*. For more information on *Revolutionary Times*, please visit <http://www.morristourism.org/>.

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