



# The Bulletin

*The monthly newsletter of The National Washington-Rochambeau Revolutionary Route Association*

**SEPTEMBER 2021**

**On the Web: [www.w3r-us.org](http://www.w3r-us.org)**

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*Re-enactors fire a musket salute as Sal Lilienthal begins the Tour in his kayak on Narragansett Bay.*

## **Like Armies, Bike-Kayak Tour Overcomes Challenges, Reaches Goal**

The 2021 Washington-Rochambeau Bike and Kayak Tour reached its destination, the Victory Monument in Yorktown, VA, on schedule Aug. 28 after overcoming anticipated and unexpected challenges that threatened to cut the odyssey short. As planned, the Tour rolled out of Newport, RI, Aug. 14 and, after nearly 800 miles of pedaling and paddling, reached Yorktown two weeks later. After two travel days back north, the adventure concluded with kayaking in Boston Harbor Aug. 31.



*Jeff Canning, left, and Sal Lilienthal at the Victory Monument Aug. 28.*

The Tour, whose theme was “Experience America’s Roads and Waterways to Independence,” was organized by W3R-US Director Sal Lilienthal and was sponsored by the Washington-Rochambeau Revolutionary Route National Historic Trail (WARO), W3R-US and Sal’s Connecticut-based Bicycle Tour Company. In response to National Park Service requirements, Sal cycled solo on public highways instead of

leading a contingent of cyclists as originally planned. Jeff Canning, *Bulletin* editor and National Recording Secretary, followed him in an equipment-laden support vehicle.

“There are no words to describe the wonderful job that you have accomplished for W3R-US,” National Chair Larry Abell told Sal and Jeff afterward. “You have moved our organization forward more than I thought possible.”

Primary goals of the tour included educating the public about the existence of the Trail; commemorating the 240<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Continental and French armies’ march to Yorktown; the Trail’s opportunities for outdoor recreation; and the many interesting sites that can be visited along the Trail. The experiential program also highlighted the little-known “on the water” story critical to the French-U.S. victory over the British at Yorktown in 1781. In addition to the actual historical route, the trip included more than 100 Revolutionary War sites, U.S. and French encampments and national and state parks.

The day-by-day highlights, culled from Jeff’s daily Facebook posts:

**Day 1, Saturday, Aug. 14:** After 10 years in the works, the Tour is really happening. The starting ceremony was held at 9 a.m. on the Newport waterfront by the Rochambeau statue. Sal placed a wreath and a contingent from the Artillery Company of Newport fired a musket salute. Sal paddled his kayak 15 miles to Independence Park in Bristol, RI, then pedaled his bike 15 miles to Providence, RI.



*Sal holds a bike wheel aloft to mark Rochambeau’s carriage mishap at the Huntington Birthplace.*

**Day 2, Sunday, Aug. 15:** Today’s ride by Sal of 82 miles began at University Hall on the Providence campus of Brown University. The building was used by the French as a military hospital. Next stop was the Waterman Tavern in Coventry, RI, where the French spent their first night after leaving Providence. There was a brief photo opportunity with folks at the Samuel Huntington Birthplace in Scotland, CT, where a wheel broke on Rochambeau’s carriage. Rochambeau stopped three times at White’s Tavern in Andover, CT, the next stop. The final stop of the day was the Old State House in Hartford, CT, which stands on the site of an early meeting between Washington and Rochambeau.

**Day 3, Monday, Aug. 16:** Today’s relatively short (27 miles) trek began in downtown Hartford at the Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art, the site of the home of Colonel Jeremiah Wadsworth, where Washington and Rochambeau met in September 1780. The next stop was French Hill in Marion, CT, where Rochambeau’s troops camped in June 1781 and November 1782. Just down the street is the Asa



*French Hill in Marion, CT.*

Barns (later spelled Barnes) Tavern, where Rochambeau stayed during the encampments. The last stop of the day was the East Farms Cemetery in Waterbury, CT, where two French soldiers were buried after they died of injuries when a piece of artillery fell on them.

**Day 4, Tuesday, Aug. 17:** With flags on East Main Street in Waterbury indicating the site, Sal opened a ceremony at East Farms Cemetery with brief remarks, followed by a musket salute by re-enactors. While Sal headed to the Odell House in Hartsdale, NY (Rochambeau's headquarters during the summer of 1781), 73 miles away, the support van developed brake trouble and Jeff spent much of the afternoon at the Newtown, CT, Car Care Center. When the van could not be promptly repaired, Sal's father, Peter, came to the rescue with a rental U-Haul truck and he and Jeff caught up with Sal in Hartsdale.



*Sal, re-enactors at East Farms Cemetery.*

**Day 5, Wednesday, Aug. 18:** Sal departed on today's 33-mile segment from the Odell House and, after riding up Westchester's South and North County Trailways, arrived



*Pines Bridge Memorial ceremony.*

in Yorktown Heights for a ceremony at the Pines Bridge Memorial,



*Sal departs from the Odell House.*

which honors the victims of a nearby massacre May 14, 1781. Next stop was the nearby First Presbyterian Church of Yorktown, where a ceremony was held at the final resting place of the massacre victims. Sal then



*Linda Puglisi presents proclamation.*

rode off to Verplanck, where Cortlandt Supervisor Linda Puglisi honored participants with a proclamation, followed by a musket salute. Sal then got into his kayak and, accompanied by the Verplanck Fire District's marine unit, paddled four



*Verplanck's marine unit follows Sal as he kayaks across the Hudson River to Stony Point.*



*Harriet Cornell reads proclamation.*

miles across the Hudson River at the King's Ferry, where the allies crossed in 1781 to Stony Point. Janet Lee Burnet, state Chair of W3R-NY, welcomed participants to a reception at the Hudson Water Club in West Haverstraw. Veteran county Legislator Harriet Cornell presented a proclamation from the Rockland County Legislature.

**Day 6, Thursday, Aug. 19:** We began today's segment at the entrance to the Stony Point Battlefield in New York and crossed into New Jersey at Mahwah. A marker at a Montville intersection noted that Washington's troops had camped in the area and that a nearby bridge was a key transportation link during the Revolutionary War. We arrived at the Ford Mansion/Washington's Headquarters in Morristown, NJ, after a 50-mile journey that included several challenging twists and turns. A magnificent statue of Washington stands across the street from the headquarters.



*The Washington statue.*

*On the front steps of the Ford Mansion in Morristown during the welcoming ceremony.*



**Day 7, Friday, Aug. 20:**

An 8 a.m. ceremony at the Ford Mansion/Washington's Headquarters was led by Julie Diddell, state Chair of W3R-NJ and national Vice Chair of W3R-US, the first of four events she and her W3R-NJ team shepherded along today's



*The Van Veghten House, the second stop of the day.*

41-mile segment. Tom Ross, Superintendent of Morristown National Historical Park, welcomed the participants, and re-enactors saluted Sal. Next stop was an 11 a.m. ceremony and luncheon at the Van Veghten House in Bridgewater Township, built in 1720. The W3R-NJ team welcomed Sal and led the second ceremony of the day before Sal rode off to Princeton. The third event on the schedule was a



*Princeton Mayor Mark Freda, blue shirt, welcomes Tour.*

2:30 p.m. welcoming ceremony at the Princeton Battle Monument (Jan. 3, 1777) with remarks by Princeton Mayor Mark Freda, Janice Selinger, Executive Director of Crossroads of the American Revolution, and Roger Williams, state historian of the Sons of the American Revolution. Mike Russell, President of the

Princeton Battlefield Society, presented Sal with a commemorative coin. Sal was later honored at the fourth event, a gathering at the Yankee Doodle Tap Room at the historic Nassau Inn that included Sam Stephens, Executive Director of the Trent House, and his board members.

**Day 8, Saturday, Aug. 21:** We passed the midpoint of the Tour as Sal pedaled 95 miles to push his total mileage since Newport to more than 400. We began the day at the Princeton Battle Monument, then went to the Trent House in Trenton, NJ, built in 1719, where he was welcomed by Paul Larson and W3R Leadership Council member Sam Stephens. After entering Pennsylvania, Jeff drove straight to Valley Forge National Historical Park rather than try to follow Sal through the narrow, congested streets of central Philadelphia. Sal arrived via a bike path along the



*At Valley Forge with Bonique Thompson-Harris, left, and Mandel Smith.*

Schuylkill River for an afternoon ceremony at the Patriots of African Descent Monument, erected in 1993 by the Valley Forge Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority Inc. Mandel Smith, chair of the sorority's Patriots Committee, and committee member Bonique Thompson-Harris joined us. Mandel shared the story of the monument, the first in a national park to commemorate patriots of African descent who served in the Revolutionary War. Three different images represent the societal roles of Colonial Blacks and their purpose in joining the struggle for independence – free men who volunteered to fight, slaves who received freedom as payment for their service and slaves who served as soldier substitutes for their masters or attended them on the battlefield, only to return to their previous condition of servitude after the war. Sal noted the importance of sharing the unfamiliar stories of the war.



*At the Trent House with Paul Larson, left, Sam Stephens.*



*Sal, in green vest, leads youngsters on a cycle tour of Brandywine Village in Wilmington.*

**Day 9, Sunday, Aug. 22:** The day began in heavy rain from Hurricane Henri but the downpour had abated and the sky was clearing by the time Sal returned to Independence Hall in Philadelphia for the formal start of today's 36-mile ride. Sal rode off to Brandywine Village Plaza in Wilmington, DE, where murals emphasize the diversity of the Continental Army. Fifteen young cyclists arrived at noon and Bill Conley, chair of W3R-



*Sal speaks at Hale-Byrnes House.*

DE, discussed the diversity of the army that passed the site in 1781 and 1782. Sal led the young cyclists on a 45-minute ride around the Village, after which they received blue W3R T-shirts. Sal and Jeff later went to the Hale-Byrnes House in Stanton, DE, where former W3R-US Chair Kim Burdick hosted a gathering of 30 people and Sal and Jeff spoke about the Tour and its significance in highlighting little-known stories of the March to Yorktown.

**Day 10, Monday, Aug. 23:** The U-Haul was stolen overnight, along with everything in it, including the kayak, both bicycles, tools, tire pumps, spare parts and three boxes of W3R T-shirts. In other words, anything Sal and Jeff had not brought into the hotel was gone. Fortunately, their computers, clothes and paperwork – the items that mattered most – were in the hotel, thank God. The police said the U-Haul was one of three stolen in the area overnight, most likely for use in illicit activities or for parts and scrap metal. Determined to continue with the Tour, Sal called Kim Burdick, who drove him and Jeff to a shop in Newark, where Sal bought a new bicycle, and a car rental agency, for a support vehicle. They were on the road at 1:05 p.m. for today's 34-mile segment. The first stop was the site of the Battle of Cooch's Bridge, Sept. 3, 1777, the only Revolutionary War battle in Delaware. The next stop was Elk Landing/Head of Elk in Maryland, the embarkation point for many French and Continental soldiers, followed by the Rodgers Tavern in Perryville, MD. Without his own vessel, and it being too late in the day to rent one, Sal had to forgo kayaking across the Susquehanna



*Jeff, Sal and Kim Burdick with the new bicycle.*

River from Perryville to Havre de Grace, MD, instead cycling across the U.S. Route 40 bridge. Havre de Grace has plazas honoring Rochambeau and Lafayette.

**Day 11, Tuesday, Aug. 24:** Sal and Jeff returned to Rochambeau Plaza in Havre de Grace for the start of today's 38-mile cycling segment to Baltimore for a noon program. Washington and Lafayette are honored with monuments in Baltimore's Mount Vernon Cultural/Historic District. Sal and Jeff drove to Annapolis, MD, where Sal's cousin Larry Nordhauser loaned him his kayak and took him to the



*On Chesapeake Bay off Annapolis.*

Thomas Point Shoal Lighthouse for

kayaking in Chesapeake Bay. The final stop of the day was kayaking near Annapolis' city dock.



*At the Washington Monument in Baltimore.*



*At the Maryland State House in Annapolis, above, and at the 1911 monument at St. John's College.*

**Day 12, Wednesday, Aug. 25:** Sal and Jeff drove back to Baltimore for the official start of today's 38-mile cycling trek at the Washington Monument. Following the Old Post Road (now Generals Highway) to the Maryland State House in Annapolis, they photographed three markers at sites

significant to Washington and Rochambeau – Spurrier's Tavern, the road through Crownsville and Belvoir. After a photo op at the State House, they had lunch at the historic Middleton Tavern and paid their respects at a 1911 monument on the campus of Saint John's College honoring the French soldiers and sailors who helped the United States win their independence.



*As close as Sal could get to the White House.*



**Day 13, Thursday, Aug. 26:** Sal began today's 69-mile segment at the State House in Annapolis, bound for Washington, DC. He tried without success to get through congestion, construction and a heavy police



*At George Washington's Mount Vernon.*

presence to a statue of Rochambeau erected in 1902 in Lafayette Park opposite the White House. The best he could manage was a photo of him with the White House in the background. Next stop was George Washington's Mount Vernon on the bank of the Potomac River in Virginia, every bit as magnificent as advertised, where he had special permission to bring his bike onto the grounds (usually not allowed) for a photo op. Thanks to W3R-US Treasurer Dave and Director Sam Meredith for making the arrangements there and at other stops in Virginia.

**Day 14, Friday, Aug. 27:** Today's 81-mile trek through continuing heat and humidity began at Mount Vernon a little after 7 a.m. Sal and Jeff followed U.S. Route 1 as far as Fredericksburg, VA, then turned slightly southeast to U.S. 17, Virginia 2 and U.S. 301, which were marked by "Washington Rochambeau Route" signs. Sal rolled into Hanover (just northeast of Richmond) at 3 p.m. and received a musket salute from re-



*Re-enactors prepare to welcome Sal with a musket salute at the Hanover Tavern.*



*At Victory Monument.*

**Day 15, Saturday, Aug. 28:** THEY DID IT! Sal and Jeff rolled into Yorktown on schedule for a 3 p.m. welcome ceremony at the Victory Monument, having overcome a series of obstacles and challenges to deliver the two-week odyssey they had promised. The day's 74-mile ride began at the Hanover Tavern and was proceeding uneventfully until one of the bike's tires picked up a 1.25-inch nail in Toano, about 25 miles from Yorktown. Fortunately, Sal, with his years of expertise in dealing with bicycles, replaced the punctured tube with a spare and was soon back on the road through increasing heat and humidity. A gathering of 20 people welcomed him and Jeff at the Monument. After a photo session, Jeff kissed the Monument and offered a quick



*Sal and Jeff were feted during a reception at York Hall.*

prayer of thanks to God for helping him and Sal to arrive safely. They were feted during a reception at nearby York Hall, receiving a proclamation from Walt Zaremba, a member of the York County Board of Supervisors. Dave Meredith presented them with commemorative coins. The gathering broke up around 5 p.m. and Sal and Jeff were on the road 10 minutes later for the first part of the drive home.

**Interlude, Sunday, Aug. 29:** After spending the night in Princeton, NJ, Sal and Jeff drove the rest of the way to their respective homes. The ride gave them an opportunity to discuss a few preliminary thoughts about the book in which they plan to chronicle the Tour.



*Final segment – Sal kayaks around Boston Harbor.*

**Day 16, Tuesday, Aug. 31:** Sal put the final exclamation point on the Tour by paddling around Boston Harbor in a rented kayak with the gold dome of the Massachusetts State House and Boston Common in the background. He drove to Boston from his home in Connecticut, spent some time on the water and then returned home, mission accomplished. (Jeff was not able to join Sal because of other obligations.) It is most appropriate that Boston was the finale of the Tour because Rochambeau and his troops, their mission in the

United States accomplished, sailed from there to new assignments at the end of 1782.

\* \* \* \* \*

Photos of the Tour were taken by Jeff, Sal, Julie Diddell, Dave Meredith, Amy Parker, Lucie Poirier, Denise Santalis, Ellen von Karajan and a few helpful passersby.

To help defray the cost of the Tour, please visit [www.w3r-us.org](http://www.w3r-us.org) or send a check to W3R-US, P.O. Box 38255, Baltimore, MD 21231.

To access Jeff's full day-by-day posts and photos on Facebook, on which this narrative is based: <https://www.facebook.com/WashingtonRochambeauRevolutionaryRouteAssociation>

## **From the National Chair ... Congratulations, Thanks**

Congratulations are due for a monumental achievement for The National Washington-Rochambeau Revolutionary Route Association (W3R-US). Sal Lilienthal, with Jeff Canning's support, brought prestige and honor to W3R-US as they traversed, primarily by bicycle, the general route that French and U.S. forces traveled on the road to victory at Yorktown 240 years ago. What a great way to provide recognition of this anniversary of a key piece of our nation's history!

In the process of accomplishing this feat, the two served as great W3R-US ambassadors as they stopped to share and experience Revolutionary War historic sites in each of the nine states and the District of Columbia. As they made their way, old and new faces joined the team to celebrate the history and share stories of the trip.

W3R-US is closer today because of the efforts of these two. We have shared local history that we were not aware of. Perhaps even more important was the camaraderie as we gathered to support the effort and share the success of the trip. The bonds of friendship were strengthened and new friendships were created in each state with each succeeding celebration.

I am pleased to note that there were many generous cash contributions by W3R members. There were also in-kind donations to support the events in terms of travel, parking, food and re-enactors. Several of our members hosted the team with lodging and food as they made their way. I feel that we had about 75% of our organization financially supporting the Tour in some way, and we still have donations coming in. We will keep you advised of the level of support.

As you know, there were mishaps along the way. The van broke down. The U-Haul that was rented to complete the trip was stolen, along with Sal's kayak, both bicycles and tools. W3R T-shirts were stolen. Less determined individuals might have given up.

It is important to realize that Sal laid out personal funds far in excess of the funds that were received by WARO and W3R-US. We have made a commitment that any additional funds W3R-US receives for the trip will go to Sal to defray his costs. I request that the remaining 25% support the trip with donations small or large. Let's make our support 100%. Sal deserves our total support.

In conclusion, let me simply say how proud I am of the effort by the entire W3R-US team. Sal and Jeff have given each of us the opportunity to participate at least vicariously in the Bike and Kayak Tour and the 240th celebration. Please join me in offering our sincere gratitude and thanks!

*– Larry Abell, National Chair*

