



**SB 686/ HR 1286
Testimony of Kim Burdick, MA, MPA
National Chairman Washington-Rochambeau Revolutionary Route
Thursday, April 26, 2007**

www.w3r-us.org,
<http://xenophongroup.com/mcjoynt/yrtnsieg.htm>
www.NPS.Gov/Boso/w-r

The National Washington-Rochambeau Revolutionary Route Association (W3R-USA) strongly supports SB 686 and HR 1286, ensuring the creation of the Washington-Rochambeau National Historic Trail. The W3R is a many-faceted jewel. It is patriotic. It is educational. It is an economic development tool. It is a heritage tourism dream.

The W3R is a positive and healthy environmental conservation and heritage stewardship project. This historic trail follows old roads in old towns and cities and can easily partner with greenways and blueways. The W3R needs no extra land. It has local, county and state government assistance and international support. It extends an olive branch to France and pleases old history teachers like me! It is a wonderful project and it is a legacy that we ask you to whole-heartedly embrace.

The Washington-Rochambeau National Historic Trail (W3R) traces the 685 mile route that thousands of allied American and French Revolutionary War soldiers and their baggage train followed to defeat the British at the Battle of Yorktown. (See pages 4, 5.6.)

Beginning in Newport Rhode Island, these allied troops followed the Kings Highway and unpaved rural roads south through nine states, through Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, and the then not-yet-created District of Columbia, into Virginia, relying on the kindness, the patriotic fervor and sometimes the avarice of the American citizens they encountered along the way. Their success at the Battle of Yorktown, resulting in the surrender of British General Cornwallis on October 19, 1781, marked the unofficial end of the American Revolution.

After the Battle of Yorktown, these intrepid souls walked back home, ending their trek in Boston on Christmas Eve 1782 when the remaining French soldiers sailed home.

W3R-USA members know that the National Park Service, with its expertise, its technical services, and its professional strength and organizational ability, is needed to help make this national historic trail an enduring source of national pride.

We know, and the employees of the National Park Service know, that people are fascinated by this National Historic Trail, and that Americans love walking in the footsteps of history. The board members and volunteers of the W3R-USA know from first-hand experience that creating this National Historic Trail is both a feasible and a reasonable project.

We know, because we have worked on W3R projects in all nine states and DC, that this is a great project—a real constituent pleaser—and we ask you, most sincerely ask you, the members of United States Senate, our Congress, to authorize this National Historic Trail. We ask you to help us give this 225th anniversary legacy from the past, and the present, to the future—to your children and grandchildren; our children and grandchildren, to the seventh-generation to come.

Our organization, W3R-USA, is a non-profit 501 c-3, created specifically to celebrate and communicate the importance of the march of the allied American and French soldiers of the Yorktown Campaign. Since before 9/11, W3R members have worked on special projects, seminars, symposiums, re-enactments, wreath-layings, 18th century concerts and dances, all geared to making this historic trail come to life. We spend our grocery money, our very middle-class paychecks, and all our spare time, breathing life into this magical story. Some of us have already walked the route.

In 2004, Lee Patrick Anderson, historian at Fort Mifflin, Pennsylvania walked the W3R from Newport, Rhode Island to his home in Mullica Hill, New Jersey. In 2005 W3R-DE sponsored a “Hike the Pike” Day with people walking the first leg of Delaware’s W3R Revolutionary Route. Sig Helstrom, an 80-year-old man from Graylyn Crest, Delaware, walked the “Hike the Pike’s” ten mile route in 140 minutes. In 2006, Mike Fitzgerald, Dave Holloway and David Fagerberg walked all 685 miles, from Newport, Rhode Island to Yorktown, Virginia, arriving in time for the 225th Anniversary of the Yorktown Campaign. Boy Scouts in Rhode Island and other states, college students, and interested persons along the Route joined the marchers from time to time, sometimes marching the W3R across their home states, sometimes walking for many days, then going back to work, only to rejoin the marchers in another state.

W3R volunteers in each state welcomed the marchers as they crossed over each state’s borders, local residents hung breathlessly on their words as they told about their adventures and misadventures; the towns and cities held celebrations, parties and dinners celebrating both the historic march and the contemporary marchers; and we are currently hoping to raise enough money to produce a documentary film about their journey.

The creation of this National Historic Trail is a good, tangible way to show the citizens that Government officials are, indeed, proud to be Americans and proud of American history. In the process of planning and preparing 225th Yorktown Campaign anniversary celebrations in all nine states and DC, we learned that the grass-roots citizens of both parties have been very disturbed that our leaders seemed to blow off America’s 225th anniversary. We learned that most Americans are interested in the real stories about American history. Ordinary citizens, gas-station attendants, grocery clerks, school

teachers, insurance salesmen, artists, writers, state and county policemen and national guardsmen took matters into their own hands. They joined together to help W3R-USA mark America's 225th anniversary. The constituents made the W3R come alive. Local, city, county, and state governments in the nine W3R states, DC, and France contributed time, money and volunteers to this effort. Some of the projects were very sophisticated; others were simple acts of love.

Historic house museums and private homes opened their doors for lectures and tours. Special Rochambeau dinners and colonial balls were held. Jack Jouette's ride across Virginia was recreated. W3R volunteers began to wear matching scarves and neckties to show solidarity. French Ambassador Levitte and Consul General Alex-Lyoudi were honored guests in every one of these states, and faithfully attended wreath-layings, commemorative events, wayside marker dedications, and wine and cheese parties. The President of Rhode Island's Naval War College gave a heart-warming 225th Anniversary speech in French, and David McCullough spoke from the heart of the important role that the French soldiers-and the French citizens of the thirteen colonies played in fighting for our independence.

A poor black lady in Wilmington humbly offered the marchers money for a cup of coffee, another who saw them marching through her neighborhood offered to make them a pancake breakfast. An Italian-American woman spent all day making them homemade soup because she knew they were cold, wet and hungry. A first-generation American from Scotland wrote a marching tune for America's 225th anniversary.

An artist from Scotland, Connecticut is painting 100 wall-sized canvases that illustrate the story of the allied French and American troops, illustrating the scenes along the 685 mile route with love and good cheer. Black Patriots from across the nation attended a Delaware Humanities Forum conference in north Wilmington, to discuss the roles their own ancestors had played in the American Revolution; a Rochambeau re-enactor living in the State of Washington criss-crossed the country repeatedly to participate in activities all along this 685 mile route.

I, personally, have been very touched and humbled by the interest and enthusiasm, the fun and the frustration, of working on the Washington-Rochambeau Revolutionary Route. It has been a beautiful and a heart-warming experience for me, a history teacher, and a mother; a descendant of Revolutionary War soldiers, and, a person of French descent, to see this project come together.

I am delighted to have had this opportunity to address you, and I most sincerely ask you to join us in this constituent-pleasing endeavor. This is a National Historic Trail like no other. It comes to you with its own fan club!

Thank you all very much for all you do, every day, for the citizens of the United States of America.

Respectfully Submitted.

Kim Elizabeth Rogers Burdick, National Chairman W3R-USA

About Kim Burdick, 2007-2008 National Chairman, W3R-USA

Kim Rogers Burdick, MA, MPA, staffed the Delaware General Assembly's Natural Resources Committee, chaired by Representative George Carey of Milford, Sussex County, Delaware, for ten years. She was responsible for the creation of both Delaware's Coastal Heritage Greenway and the Delaware State Folklife Program, now housed in the Delaware Department of Natural Resources. Kim served as Delaware General Assembly's staff person on the National Educational Goals Committee. In 1994, she was selected by the Council of State Governments as a Henry Toll Fellow. Mrs. Burdick served on the Board of Advisors of the National Trust for Historic Preservation from 1991-2000.

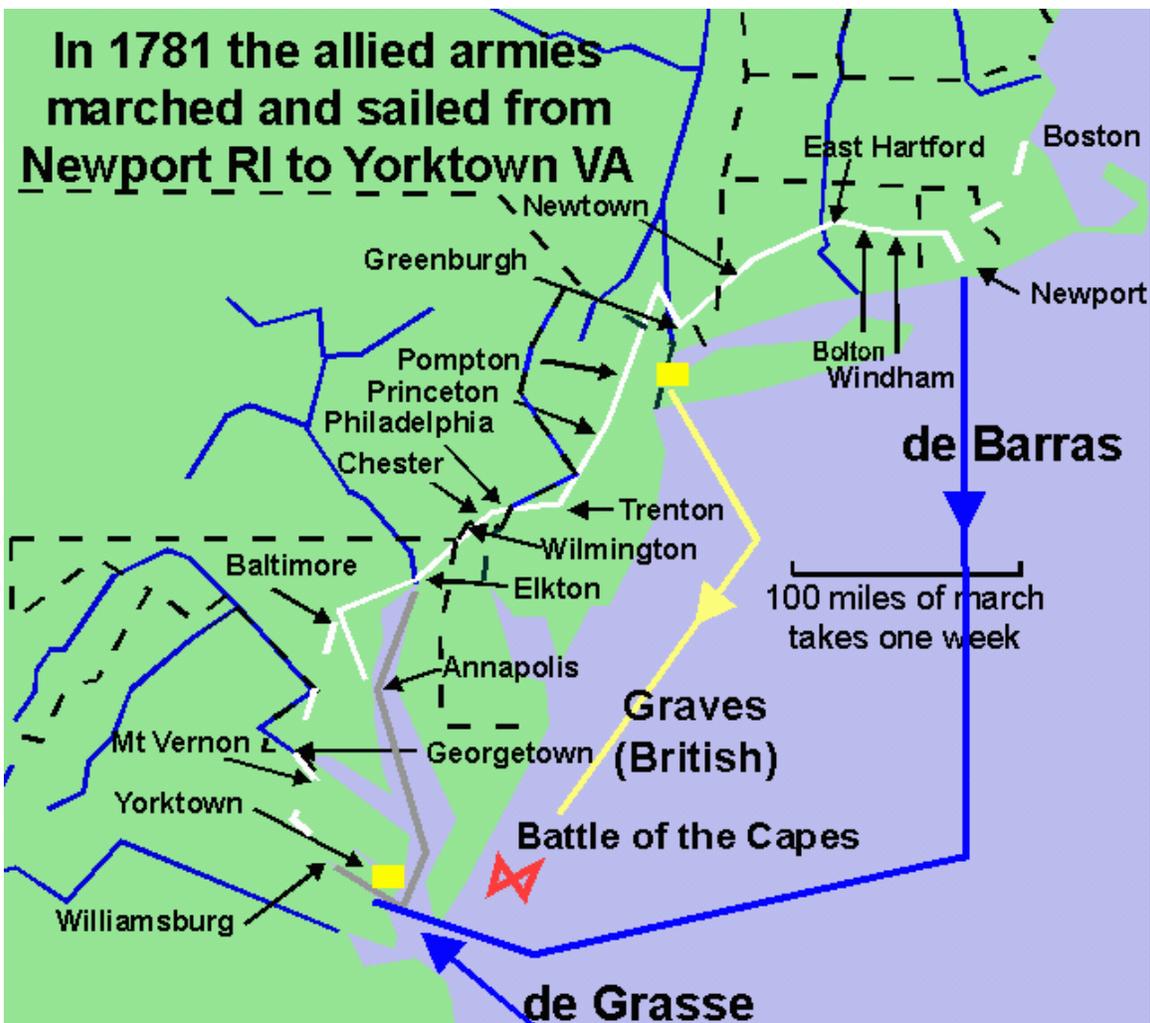
Currently the National Chairman of the nine- state and D.C. National Washington-Rochambeau Revolutionary Route Committee (W3R-USA), she is also the Chairman of the Delaware Humanities Council. Kim Burdick teaches American History at Delaware Technical and Community College-Wilmington Campus. Contact her at:

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W3R-USA

In the summer and fall of 2006, the W3R Marchers walked from Newport, RI to Yorktown, Virginia, a total of 685 miles, faithfully following the route taken by the allied American and French troops of the American Revolution.



THE SIEGE OF YORKTOWN (1781)



Detail of the *Siege of Yorktown (1781)*, a 1786 gouache painting by Louis-Nicholas van Blarenberghe. Blarenberghe was a professional painter of battle and campaign scenes for the French army. He executed his Yorktown paintings under the direct supervision of Berthier, a skilled draftsman and former member of Rochambeau's staff in America (1781-83).

By the end of September, **approximately 18,000+ American and French combatants** had gathered in the Williamsburg area of Virginia, while **about 8,000+ British soldiers, with their German auxiliary troops** occupied Yorktown and Gloucester Point. The number of combatants is not exactly known, and the **figures given in historical accounts are estimates**, which are based on various administrative reports prior to, and after, the siege. Such data is then adjusted based on assumptions as to what number are 'effectives' [physically able to engage in combat] and as to naval personnel being employed 'in direct support' of the land operations. One outstanding scholar of the military aspects of the Revolution, Mark Mayo Boatner III, goes farther than most in identifying his assumptions and other factors in deriving his figures. The following is based upon data from his remarkable *Encyclopedia of the American Revolution* (p.1248, *Bicentennial Edition*, NY, 1974).

AMERICANS

| | | |
|-------------------------------------|--------|--------------|
| Continental Infantry | 7,290 | |
| Artillery | 514 | |
| Cavalry | 176 | |
| Total Continental Army | | 7,980 |
| Militia | | 3,153 |
| Total (non adjusted for effectives) | | 11,133 |
| Non-effectives (sick) | | |
| absent | -1,000 | |
| present | -700 | |
| Total Effectives ('rounded figure') | | 9,500 |

FRENCH

| | | |
|---|-------|--------------|
| Rochambeau's | 4,000 | |
| St. Simon's | 3,000 | |
| Army detachments [<i>See note at bottom of page</i>] | 800 | |
| Naval personnel aboard ships, in direct support. | 1,000 | |
| Total | | 8,800 |
| Excluding est 15,000 naval personnel on ships that contributed to the overall campaign. | | |

TOTAL ALLIED FORCE **18,300**

BRITISH

| | | |
|--|--------|--------------|
| 'Reported' army strength at start. Includes German mercenaries. | 8,885 | |
| Estimated naval personnel directly supporting | 840 | |
| Estimate naval personnel figure is from number that surrendered to de Grasse. | | |
| Estimated British total at start | | 9,725 |
| Estimated sick | -1,500 | |
| TOTAL BRITISH FORCE | | 8,225 |

Chart courtesy of Durf McJoynt, W3R-VA