

September 2011 FANs Meeting

To contact us:
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The monthly general meeting was held on Monday September 12th at the Visitor Center
Notes from the meeting...



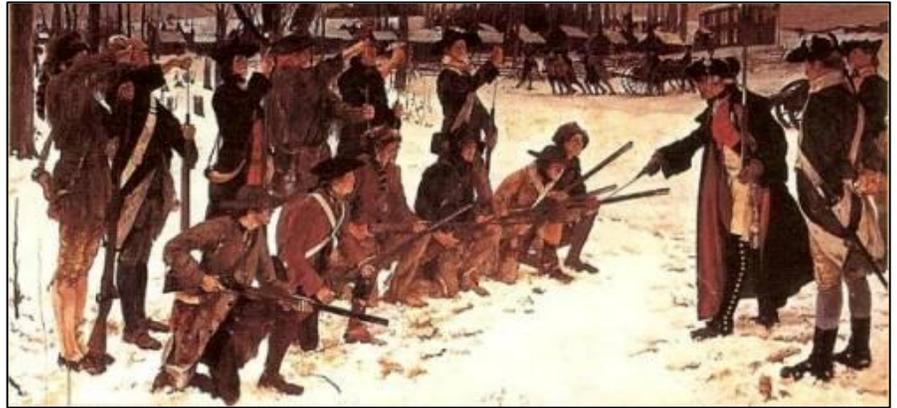
Painting by Don Troiani

1. Dan Cruson's book about Putnam Park is to arrive November 1st.
2. The group discussed ways to increase summer craftsman program attendance.
3. Nate Hale said the contractor is working on permits for cleaning Putnam Lake.
4. Entire museum collection has been entered into an inventory system.
5. TG purchasing 200 new Revolutionary War themed note cards which will be for sale at VC.
6. TG working on possibility of CT Horseguard performing at park.
7. This year's *December Winter Walk* to be on Saturday, Dec 3rd.at 11:00AM at the Visitor Center.

The Baron's Training Pays Off

How to train thousands of troops in just three months? Von Steuben selected men to form a "Model Company". When this special group was trained, it went out and trained other regiments. The drill instructions were passed down to all troops at Valley Forge during the three month window.

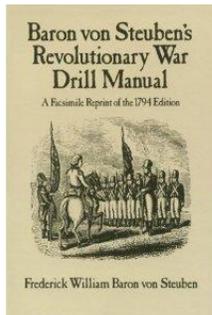
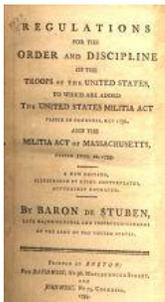
Did the training pay off? It certainly did! In June, the British troops left Philadelphia to return to NYC. They went by land, cutting across New Jersey. Washington's troops followed them only to harass their rear guard, but the British main army turned around and the harassment turned into a full scale battle (The Battle of Monmouth). The recently trained army performed amazingly well against the British regulars. That night, the British escaped to the New Jersey coast where they had their fleet take them across to the city. This was the last major battle in the northern region.



Baron von Steuben could not speak English, he used interpreters during his drill training sessions. He ranted, raved and swore oaths ... which the troops understood just by the tone of the Baron's voice.

von Steuben's Blue Book

America's first inspector general, Baron von Steuben, strongly influenced the structure of the army corps in the Continental Army. He instituted the "Regulations for the Order and Discipline of the Troops of the United States", commonly called the "Blue Book.". The book also established the qualities a soldier must have to serve in demanding positions. For 30 years, the Blue Book served as the American Army's regulatory bible which used it up until the war of 1812.



It is no secret that Washington had a negative outlook on the militia units. It's not that they didn't have drill instructions for their soldiers ... they did. But there were no two regiments that used the same drill instructions. They used whatever the commander had in is possession. Militia's played key roles in some battles throughout the war... the Saratoga victory being just key example.

After the conclusion of the war, Baron von Steuben helped model the American army as it exists today. There are military academies for leaders. There is the standing regular army, and there is the National Guard which is overseen by the states (with shared oversight by the regular army). The guard's ancestors were the militias of the 1600 and 1700's.

The next FAN's Meeting will be on Monday, **October 10th, 2011**
at 7:00PM at the Visitor Center at Putnam Park.

