ANNUAL MONROE CROSSING of the DELAWARE RIVER

Saturday December 10th 2005 New Hope, PA

The Coryell's Ferry Militia will once again transport Lt. James Monroe across the Delaware River from the Ferry Street landing in New Hope to the Lambertville side on Saturday December 10th, 2005 starting at Noon.

The Coryell's Ferry Militia is New Hope's Revolutionary War re-enactment group. The group performed its first re-enactment for the town back in 1984. Since that time The Coryell's Ferry Militia has done many performances for the public highlighting the deep importance of New Hope (Coryell's Ferry) during the American Revolution.

The Monroe Crossing represents one of those events of deep importance. In December of 1776 General Washington had very little good news. In a moment of inspiration Washington decided to make a last ditch attempt at changing the fortunes of the Continental Army by risking everything on one bold stroke. That stroke was to cross the Delaware River on Christmas night and attack the Hessian garrison at their barracks in Trenton. Washington planned three separate strikes involving crossings at McKonkey's Ferry (Washington's Crossing), Morrisville Ferry and Dunk's Ferry (Bristol). In addition Washington planned a vital fourth crossing. The General wanted a small contingent of troops to cross at Coryell's, penetrate into New Jersey and seize a vital intersection at the junction of the Princeton and Pennington Road. Only Washington's group and the troops at Coryell's were successful in their mission ! The other crossings failed.

New Hope has had many local historians who discovered this amazing story. Robert Gerenser, the event organizer, used to listen to these historians recount the amazing true stories about the town. One of the historians gave Mr. Gerenser a copy of James Monroe's Autobiography. In that volume James Monroe details in his own words the story of that night. Copies of those excerpts will be available to the public during the event. Mr. Gerenser says, " if the residents of our valley truly knew of the amazing events that happened here they would have a better understanding of the importance of our town's place in the founding of our country. Other places have to invent history to create civic pride. In New Hope we have so much to point to from the desperate endeavors of General Washington to the daring deeds of Lt. James Monroe and the steward-ship of Benedict Arnold. New Hope has seen it all. That is why reenacting historic events is important, people are given a visual reminder, a total experience of just what it might have been like."

The first president of the United States was successful at McKonkey's; the fifth President of the United States was successful at Coryell's. "That is why the telling of this story through live drama is vital to maintaining the historic identity of our amazing town." So says Robert Gerenser, Jr.. Young Mr. Gerenser is a student at Valley Forge Military Academy's Junior College where he is a Sophomore. He is expected to graduate there in May at which time he will be commissioned a Lieutenant in the United States Army. " I am only 20 years old, Lt. Monroe was still younger. At the age of 17 Monroe

volunteered for a dangerous mission to aid his commander and chief and help save the fledgling USA. It is that spirit that has inspired me to this year portray the young Lt."

The events planned this year are the Morning officers call at Gerenser's Exotic Ice Cream at 22 South Main Street to go over safety concerns and read the orders of the day. Officer's call at 11:00 AM. Formation of the troops in O'Dettes parking area at 11;45 AM. Starting at noon the troops and artillery will parade North on South Main Street - turning East onto East Ferry Street. The troops will form for inspection and the crowd will be treated to what the townspeople and Continental Army members heard for the first time 231 years ago, the reading of Tom Paine's , "American Crisis # 1" performed by Ed Kane of Philadelphia. A firing of the artillery is planned. The artillery demonstration will be at 12:45 on East Ferry Street. 1:30 on the Jersey shore and at 2:30 on the flat bottom ferry anchored in the River, below the Bridge across from the boat dock at Coryell's Ferry the crowd will have many opportunities at this time to interact with the troops. Finally, river conditions permitting, the troops will cross over the river and complete their mission.

It must be noted that neither the Coryell's Ferry Militia here in New Hope or the Reenactors at Washington Crossing Park have successfully crossed the River in three years. Last year in New hope the actual crossing was cancelled because the flooding of the previous year took away the replica flat bottom ferry. This year the crew of Coryell's Ferry have built a brand new ferry boat, "Huck-Huck#7"
Special thanks go to the construction crew Captain "Butch" Delahanty, Iain Ashton and Captain Robert V. Gerenser. It is the opinion of the Coryell's Ferry crew, who will be manning the safety boat, that river conditions will this year allow a crossing.

Special thanks go to New Hope Borough Council for their continued support of this event. The New Hope Borough Police and Chief Pasqualini. Tom Carol from the Street Department and Dan from the Bridge Commission for hanging the Banner. Superintendent Susan Heron for permission to use park property.

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Bob Gerenser is one of the founding members of the Coryell's Ferry militia. He is best known for his stirring performances as George Washington. Each year he hosts two events in New Hope in December. The first is the memorable and romantic Colonial Christmas Ball held the first Saturday in December and the second is the Monroe Crossing held on the second Saturday of December. Mr. Gerenser has for many years been the sole financial supporter for these events.