

It was the winter of 1776. With the War of Independence failing, General George Washington and his ragged army had experienced only defeat and despair. In the preceding months, Washington's campaign in New York had not gone well; the Battle of Long Island ended in a loss when the British troops managed to out-maneuver the Continental Army. On December 7 and 8, he was forced to retreat across the Delaware River to Pennsylvania.

As the harsh Pennsylvania winter set in, the morale of the American troops was at an all-time low. The soldiers were forced to deal with a lack of both food and warm clothing while Washington watched his army shrink due to desertions and expiring enlistments. Now, more than ever, a victory was desperately needed.

The original plan called for three divisions to cross the Delaware River under the cover of darkness. Various types of boats were gathered on the Pennsylvania side as a defensive measure during the retreat earlier in the month in compliance with General Washington's orders. Most notable were the large, heavy Durham boats used to carry pig iron down the Delaware River. These boats would now be used for the crossing.

Fully expecting to be supported by two divisions south of Trenton, Washington assembled his troops near McConkey's Ferry in preparation for the crossing. By 6 PM, 2,400 troops began crossing

the ice-choked river. The operation was slow and difficult due to the condition of the river. An abrupt change in the weather forced the men to fight their way through sleet and a blinding snow storm. These obstacles proved to be too much for the supporting divisions led by Colonel Cadwalader and General Ewing. Ultimately, their attempts to cross at southern points along the Delaware River failed.

Against all odds, Washington and his men successfully completed the crossing and marched into Trenton on the morning of December 26, 1776, achieving a resounding victory over the Hessians. By moving ahead with his bold and daring plan, General George Washington reignited the cause of freedom and gave new life to the American Revolution.



McConkey's Ferry Inn

Washington Crossing Historic Park was founded in 1917 to commemorate and preserve the site where the Continental Army crossed the Delaware River. This purpose is achieved by sharing its historical significance with thousands of park visitors each year through tours, exhibits, and various special events. The spirit of the 1776 crossing is recreated every year on Christmas Day when re-enactors in Continental military dress cross the river in replica Durham boats. Visitors along shore can reflect on this moment in time that has come to mean so much to our nation.

Hours of Operation

The Washington Crossing Historic Park Visitor Center is open seven days per week, 10 AM to 5 PM, and is ADA accessible. Guided tours of the historic village are available from January through February, Friday through Sunday, 10 AM to 4 PM and from March through December, seven days per week, 10 AM to 4 PM.

Bowman's Hill Tower and the Thompson-Neely House are open seven days per week, 10 AM to 4 PM, March through December. Guided tours of the Thompson-Neely House are also available.

Outdoor recreational areas are open year round, sunrise to sunset, weather permitting.

Ticket Fees

Tickets are required for admission to Bowman's Hill Tower and for guided tours of the Historic Village and the Thompson-Neely House. Tickets may be purchased at the Washington Crossing Historic Park Visitor Center, the Thompson-Neely House, and Bowman's Hill Tower.

Adult (single site ticket): \$6.00

Adult (combination ticket): \$11.00

Youth (combination ticket): \$6.00

Children under 6: Free

Groups: Group tours are available upon request. Please contact the visitor center.

Access for People with Disabilities

 If you need an accommodation to participate in park activities due to a disability, please contact the visitor center. This publication text is available in alternative formats.

More Information

Washington Crossing Historic Park

P.O. Box 103

1112 River Road

Washington Crossing, PA 18977

Historic Park (215) 493-4076

Bowman's Hill Tower (215) 862-3166

email: washingtoncrossingsp@pa.gov

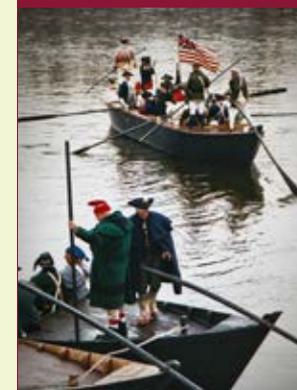
www.dcnr.state.pa.us/StateParks/FindAPark/WashingtonCrossing

www.WashingtonCrossingPark.org

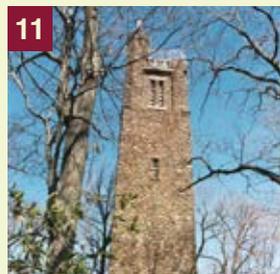
Washington Crossing Historic Park is administered by the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources in partnership with the Friends of Washington Crossing Park.

Equal Opportunity Employer

www.visitPAparks.com



Washington Crossing Historic Park Visitor Guide



1. Washington Crossing Historic Park Visitor Center

This location provides orientation and information about Washington Crossing Historic Park, including a documentary film, exhibits, gift shop, restrooms, ticket sales, and park offices.

2. Durham Boat House

This twentieth-century structure houses the Durham boat replicas. Durham boats were originally used to haul iron ore and were the sturdy type of craft used by Washington and his men for the crossing. Today, these replicas are a key component of the annual reenactment of Washington crossing the Delaware River on Christmas Day.

3. McConkey's Ferry Inn

This eighteenth-century inn and tavern was owned by Samuel McConkey. The inn served as a guard post during the Continental Army's encampment in Bucks County in December, 1776. Earthworks and cannon defended the ferry landing. According to tradition, this inn is where Washington and his aides ate their dinner prior to the crossing of the Delaware River on Christmas Day. Additions were made to the inn in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century by the Taylor family. This building continued to serve as an inn for many decades.

4. Mahlon K. Taylor House

This home was built circa 1817 for one of the town founders of Taylorsville, now known as Washington Crossing. It shows the status and prosperity of the Taylor family in the community.

5. Taylorsville Store

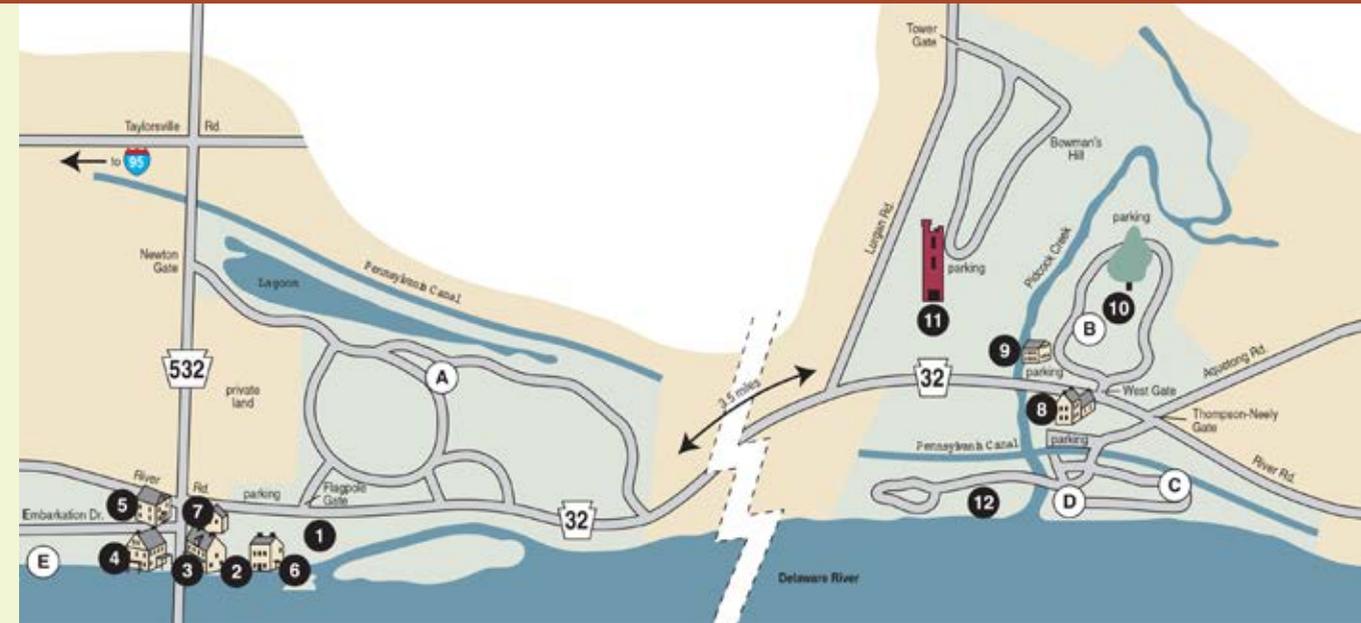
Beginning around 1828, this store was owned and operated by Mahlon K. Taylor. It also functioned as the Post Office for Taylorsville with Mahlon Taylor serving as postmaster for nearly 40 years.

6. Hibbs House

This restored and furnished nineteenth century home was erected circa 1828-1830 as part of the village of Taylorsville. It was leased out as a tenant house for craftsmen and was advertised as a wheelwright's house and shop. Open hearth cooking demonstrations are held here at various times throughout the year.

7. Frye House

The Frye House is a Taylorsville tenant home built circa 1828-1830 by the Taylor family. The home is believed to have been constructed for a blacksmith. A recreated blacksmith shop is located beside the Frye house and features demonstrations at various times throughout the year.



LOWER SECTION

- 1. Visitor Center
- 2. Durham Boat House
- 3. McConkey's Ferry Inn
- 4. Mahlon K. Taylor House
- 5. Taylorsville Store
- 6. Hibbs House
- 7. Frye House and Blacksmith Shop
- A. General Greene Picnic Pavilion ♿ ♿ ♿
- E. General Washington Picnic Pavilion ♿ ♿ ♿

UPPER SECTION

- 8. Thompson-Neely House
- 9. Thompson-Neely Grist Mill
- 10. Bowman's Hill Wildflower Preserve
- 11. Bowman's Hill Tower
- 12. Soldiers' Graves
- B. Captain Moore Picnic Pavilion ♿ ♿ ♿
- C. Colonel Glover Picnic Pavilion ♿ ♿ ♿
- D. General Sullivan Picnic Pavilion ♿ ♿ ♿

8. Thompson-Neely House

On the National Register of Historic Places, this fine example of eighteenth century architecture is located along Pidcock Creek. Once home to Robert Thompson and his son-in-law, William Neely, it was used to aid and care for convalescing soldiers healing from wounds or suffering from diseases and camp illnesses during the winter of 1776-1777.

The house was built in four sections. John Simpson, a Quaker mill owner, built the central portion of the house circa 1740. Upon his death, his Scots-Irish Presbyterian miller, Robert Thompson, married Simpson's widow and claimed ownership of the property. Thompson added the west side of the house in 1757 along with a second floor extension over the central portion. The east side of the house was completed in 1788 as a separate dwelling for Thompson's daughter and her husband, William Neely.

Near the Thompson-Neely House stands a barn and various out buildings, restored examples of the structures that would have completed an eighteenth-century farm complex.

9. Thompson-Neely Grist Mill

This restored, water-powered mill was built in the 1830s by the Neely family. The original mill, constructed nearly a century earlier, stood approximately 100 yards downstream from the present mill.

10. Bowman's Hill Wildflower Preserve

This site is devoted to the preservation of native plants of Pennsylvania. It features trails, programs, special events, and exhibits. The headquarters building contains a gift shop, public restrooms, and the Preserve offices. The Preserve is administered by the Bowman's Hill Wildflower Preserve, Inc.

11. Bowman's Hill Tower

A 125-foot structure completed in 1931 to commemorate the American Revolution, the Tower boasts a commanding view of the Delaware River and surrounding countryside. The tower roof can be reached by elevator and 23 stone steps. This site is open seven days per week, March through December, weather permitting.

12. Soldiers' Graves

The grave sites of New York Artillery Captain James Moore and many unknown soldiers of the American Revolution who died during the winter encampment of 1776-1777 are located here.