

TRAM TOUR

Hello, my name is _____ and I would like to welcome you to Washington Crossing State Park. First I would like to tell you a little bit of information about the park and then we will ride down to the Ferry House where you will be given a tour of this historic building.

The park was established in 1912 to commemorate the first turning point of the American Revolution, thus making it New Jersey's oldest historic park. Located 8 miles north of our state capital, Trenton, this park covers a total of 807 acres.

The park is equipped with a variety of unique facilities, such as the group campsites that are open for use by any group of seven or more people. Reservations for this facility can be made at the park office.

Throughout the park there are also many trails each designed with a specific activity in mind: cross country ski trails, horseback riding trails, and nature trails. One of the park's foremost facilities is the Nature Center. Here the visitor will find a variety of small animals such as turtles, frogs, snakes, birds, and raccoons, along with many educational displays pertaining to the natural environment. Also from the Nature Center are 5 different trails to hike and explore.

A second major attraction to the park is the Open Air Theater. During the summer season, every Thursday, Friday, and Saturday evening, a theater production is put on by local acting companies in the beautiful outdoor amphitheater. This summer's productions are

We will now ride to the Ferry House. If you have any questions please feel free to ask me, I will try to answer them as best I can.

START

STOP***VISITORS' CENTER

To our right is the Visitors' Center. This building was opened in 1976 for the Bicentennial celebration and contains many special facilities for the public including an extensive display of over 850 American Revolutionary artifacts, weapons, and documents, an auditorium where two audio-visual shows are shown, and restrooms.

START

STOP***CONTINENTAL LANE

To our left and right is Continental Lane. This is approximately the path that General George Washington and his men walked on December 26, 1776. The path begins near the Ferry House, which you will see in a moment and extends throughout the park for about one and a half miles.

START

STOP***FERRY HOUSE

To our right is the Johnson Ferry House. This is an eighteenth century structure which was built about 1740. The first floor of the house is furnished as it would have been at the time of the crossing. There is a guide in this building so you can have a tour of it while I wait out here for you. When everyone is finished we will continue to the overlook.

START

STOP***BARN (FLAG MUSEUM)

To our left is a beautiful fieldstone structure which was the barn for the Ferry House.

START

STOP***FIRST SIGN AT THE OVERLOOK SITE ENTITLED "SITE OF THE CROSSING"

Please read this before we go on since it details a little more background information about the crossing.

START

STOP***OVERLOOK

To our right is the Delaware River; on the far side is the state of Pennsylvania and on the near side is Washington Grove, the lower portion of the park. It took Washington and his men between eight and nine hours to cross the river due to three factors. First of all, the weather conditions on this evening were horrible; it was snowing and sleeting that night. Secondly, the river was almost completely frozen and therefore made it difficult for the men to cross. And finally, it was toilsome to transport all 2400 men across the river with only 24 boats, 22 of which were the Durham boats and 2 of which were the flat boats or ferry boats. Today this portion of the river is used for recreational purposes such as boating, fishing, and water skiing. Also, every Christmas day there is a re-enactment of the famous crossing.

START

STOP***PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE

To our right is the pedestrian bridge which crosses over Route 29 and connects the two portions of our park, the upper portion which we are on now and the lower portion, the Washington Grove area. Located at the lower portion of the park is a full size reproduction of the flat boat and another historic building, the Nelson House. The original portion of the Nelson House was constructed prior to the American Revolution and was a ferry boat terminal, but unfortunately it was destroyed. What remains of the house today was constructed about the mid-eighteen hundreds. The building is opened as scheduled in the Visitors' Center and has a display of transportation methods employed along this part of the Delaware River from the revolutionary period to the present.

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STOP***GEORGE WASHINGTON MEMORIAL ARBORETUM

Through the trees to our right is the George Washington Memorial Arboretum. Established in 1932 to commemorate Washington's bicentennial birthday, this designated area contains over one-hundred different plants, trees, and shrubs that are all native to the state of New Jersey.

START

STOP***MEMORIAL MARKERS

Some of the trees directly to our right have memorial markers. This indicates that these trees were donated in 1932 by various patriotic and service organizations to commemorate George Washington's two-hundredth birthday.

START

STOP***STATE FOREST PARK NURSEY (will be eventually omitted!)

To our right is the State Forest Park Nursey where one and a half million tree seedlings are grown per year for reforestation. These seedlings are either transferred throughout the state to various state owned property or they are sold to private landowners. In order to privately purchase trees here the buyer must be a resident of the state of New Jersey and own five or more acres of land in this state.

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STOP***VISTORS' CENTER

That concludes our tour of the park. I would like to thank-you for coming to the park and do hope you will come again. Have a great day!!

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