

# THE VICTORY TRAIL

## A THREE-MILE HIKE FOR CUB SCOUTS

*Commemorating the Battle of Connecticut Farms and The Forgotten Victory of  
Springfield*



**BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA®**  
PATRIOTS' PATH COUNCIL

*Cedar Knolls, New Jersey*

[www.ppcbsa.org](http://www.ppcbsa.org)

## Things to consider before hiking The Victory Trail Historic Walking Tour

Your Cub Scouts and families should be prepared for their hiking experience on The Victory Trail. Strong consideration should be given to the below list of things to do before you come to ensure a fully enjoyable experience.

1. One or more of your unit's adult leaders and/or parents may want to consider taking the hike for themselves in advance – and ask them to bring their Cub Scout with them. In this way they can understand how the other families and boys in the unit will respond to the experience while at the same time getting a better understanding of the trails and rest areas.
2. You may wish to conduct a pre-hike meeting. In addition to discussing the points below, you can discuss the history of The Forgotten Battle of Springfield and preview some of what the families are going to be seeing there. You can also prepare and begin some of the advancement requirements you might choose to pursue.
3. Review what appropriate hiking attire families should wear depending on season and weather conditions (unless it's been raining, sneakers are okay for this hike).
4. Give a list of items that you suggest families bring as personal gear. These may include:
  - a. First aid kit
  - b. Filled water bottle
  - c. Trail food
  - d. Flashlight
  - e. Sun screen
  - f. Whistle
  - g. Rain Gear
  - h. Etc. (best to leave the pocket knife at home for this outing)
5. Review the Buddy System in detail.
6. Provide detailed instruction on the BSA Outdoor Code as well as the Leave No Trace front- and back-country guidelines  
<http://www.scouting.org/scoutsource/OutdoorProgram/LeaveNoTrace.aspx>
7. Discuss types of poisonous plants that exist in the park, provide solid tips on how to identify them, and give guidance on what to do if anyone accidentally touches one.
8. Make sure you review with your Cub Scouts and families what they should do if they become lost or separated from the group.
9. Make sure that at least one unit leader is trained in Youth Protection and Weather Hazards. Talk through with your families about how to prepare for marginal weather conditions. Arrange to have your unit's first aid kit and an appropriately trained adult present to help with any emergencies.
10. Be sure to review the [Commitment to Safety](#), the [Guide to Safe Scouting, Risk Assessment Strategy](#), as well as [Camp Standards](#) planning tools. [www.Scouting.org](http://www.Scouting.org)

## VICTORY TRAIL QUESTIONNAIRE

### 3 Mile Historic Walking Tour

**NAME** \_\_\_\_\_

**UNIT** \_\_\_\_\_

The hike leader should complete this form with the Scouts as you complete the walking tour. Follow the directions in italics carefully to get you from one historic site to the next. At each site read the historical information and answer the question. The questionnaire will be turned to Patriots' Path Council along with the other forms included in this packet.

This trail will follow part of the approximate route taken by the British Army as it marched through what is now Elizabeth, Roselle Park, Union and Springfield in its attempt to reach Morristown. You will also learn how the New Jersey Militiamen were successful in turning back the British invasion, saving the colonies from certain defeat. Along the course of the trail you will also pass other sites of historic interest dating back to colonial times.

#### **The Victory Trail Walking Tour begins...**

#### ***Start at the Minuteman Statue in Union Square on Elizabeth Avenue.***

At dusk on the night of June 6, 1780 a very nervous American spy pulled a boat from the marsh reeds on the Staten Island shore opposite Elizabeth, NJ, and rowed carefully across the narrow Arthur Kill. A half hour later he handed his message to Colonel Elias Dayton, Commander of the 250 regulars of the New Jersey Brigade who were guarding Elizabeth. What Colonel Dayton read made his flesh crawl. The British were preparing to invade New Jersey. An army of 5,000 men was moving across Staten Island at that very moment.

Five hours later Ogden and his men, crouched behind a roadside fence near here, heard the tramp of marching feet. Soon they saw a man on horseback, and behind him a mass of red coats—the British army. Ogden told his men to aim at the rider and whispered, "Fire." The 12 muskets erupted. Cries of pain and panic rose from the British ranks. Ogden and his men ran toward Broad Street, while return volleys of British musketry sent bullets whistling harmlessly through the night. In Elizabeth, Colonel Dayton heard Ogden's report, then ordered his son. Captain Jonathan Dayton to ride for Morristown to warn George Washington, The British invasion could not have come at a worse time. In Morristown, the worst winter of the war had

badly weakened the American army. Over 600 men had deserted rather than endure the near-starvation rations on which they had been forced to live. The main army had dwindled to less than 3,600 men. Then there was the New Jersey Militia, 16,000 part-time soldiers who were supposed to turn out in emergencies like this one. Would they? Colonel Dayton could only pray that they still supported the Cause. Otherwise there was little or no hope of stopping the British. By morning they could be over the Short Hills, within few hours' march of Morristown, where the American artillery and tons of ammunition could be captured easily. The Americans had no horses to move them. If Washington's out-numbered army was forced to flee, New Jersey might be knocked out of the war. Such a major defeat in the North could wreck the Revolution. Colonel Dayton could not know that the Americans already had a great stroke of luck. One of the bullets fired by Ogden's men had crippled the general commanding the British advance guard Brigadier Thomas Stirling, one of the toughest, most aggressive officers in the British army. Colonel Ludwig von Wurmb, who replaced him, was more cautious. He decided to wait until dawn before advancing another step. Von Wurmb was especially anxious for the invasion to succeed because the man in command was like a German. George III had hired over 25,000 German troops to fight beside his British regulars in America. The commander-in-chief of these German mercenaries was Lieutenant General Wilhelm von Knyphausen. Knyphausen hoped to win a quick easy victory that would make him conquering hero of the Revolution.

1. What is the Minuteman statue holding in his right hand? \_\_\_\_\_

***Head northwest on Elizabeth Avenue (Centre St. should be on your left and Smith St. should be on your right). Cross over to the right side of the street at one of the intersections. Continue on Elizabeth Avenue, under Route 1. Turn right on Catherine Street. Turn left after one block onto East Jersey Street and cross to the opposite sidewalk. Continue along East Jersey Street.***

The brick house on the left is the Belcher-Ogden Mansion. The mansion was built by John Ogden in the late 1600s. Governor Jonathan Belcher, a royal governor of the Province of New Jersey, resided in the house from 1751 to 1757, when he died. William Peachtree Smith, a leader of the Revolutionary in New Jersey, resided next in the house and his daughter, Catherine married Elisha Boudinot, brother of Elias Boudinot, president of the Continental Congress, in a gala ceremony in the house. Among the wedding guests were George Washington, Marquis de Lafayette, Alexander Hamilton, General Thaddeus Kosciuszko, Aaron Burr and Governor William Livingston. Aaron Ogden, a descendent of John, resided in the house while he served as governor of the state. The wooden house on the right is the Bonnell House, which is presumed to be the oldest standing house in Elizabeth.

***Read the historic marker in front of the Bonnell House without entering the gate.***

2. When was the Bonnell House Built? \_\_\_\_\_

***Proceed up East Jersey Street to Boxwood Hall. Read the two plaques in front of Boxwood Hall.***

Boxwood Hall was the home of Elias Boudinot, President of the Continental Congress.

3. When was Elias Boudinot President of the Continental Congress? \_\_\_\_\_

***At Madison Avenue, cross East Jersey Street and East Scott Place into Scott Place.***

This park originally had a pathway down the middle bordered by Boxwood trees, from which Boxwood Hall got its name. At the far end of the park, facing Elizabeth Avenue, was a two-story brick building. This building had the Elizabeth Municipal offices on the second floor and was a produce market on the ground floor. The present City Hall to the west of Scott Park was built by the Works Progress Administration during the depression of the 1930s.

***Proceed along Scott Park to Elizabeth Avenue. At the Vietnam Memorial Monument, cross Elizabeth Avenue and Bridge Street bridge over the Elizabeth River. Turn right through the Park, heading toward the large brick building.***

According to a carefully preserved family tradition, Andrew Hamton is said to have eloped from Scotland with a Lady Margaret Cumins. He settled in Elizabethtown in 1696 and built a house at this site, which was enlarged in 1765. Following a fire, the house was largely rebuilt as a brick structure in 1817, on the east wall are three cornerstones. In 1749, the house and property were purchased by the Trustees of St. John's Church on Broad Street to be used as a Parsonage.

4. What is at the top of the Flag Pole? \_\_\_\_\_

**Be sure to stay on the stone walkways. Do not walk on the grass. Go up to the front walk to Pearl Street, turn right and proceed on Pearl Street to Broad Street. Turn right onto Broad Street; go past the firehouse, and cross Broad Street at Elizabeth Avenue. Read the historic markers in front of the Elizabeth Public Library.**

5. In what year did Washington stop here? \_\_\_\_\_

**Cross Rahway Avenue to the Court House. Proceed along Broad Street reading the signs in front of the Court House as you pass.**

6. When was the present Court House built? \_\_\_\_\_

**Stop at the First Presbyterian Church to read the plaques alongside the front door.**

The Colonial Pastor of this church, Reverend James Caldwell, played an important and heroic role in fighting off the British invasion which this trail recounts. More will be heard about him farther on in Union and Springfield. Many of the Elizabethtown Patriots are buried in the cemetery here, including Hannah Caldwell, wife of Reverend Caldwell, whose ghost has been seen recently. The Steeple of this church burned off after being struck by lightning.

7. What year was the church burned by the British: \_\_\_\_\_

**Continue along Broad Street, staying on the left hand side.**

The large church on the other side of the street, just past Caldwell Place, is St. Johns Church, the Parsonage of which you visited earlier. This Church dates back to 1706. The present structure was built in 1859. During the Revolutionary War, the British used the original church as a barracks.

**Continue along Broad Street. After going under the railroad arches, make the first left and then the first right. You should now be on Morris Avenue. Continue on Morris Avenue to the first entrance for Liberty Hall on the right side of the road across from Kean University. There will be a VICTORY TRAIL banner on the**

***entrance fencing at the correct entrance. Your walking tour ends here, but the history of The Forgotten Victory of Springfield continues...***

***Thank you for participating in the reenactment of our history! When your Cub Scouts become Boy Scouts, they can hike the 13-mile Victory Trail Historic Hike and learn more about the events of The Forgotten Victory of Springfield.***

***Excerpts taken from “The Battle We Never Knew We Won” by Thomas Fleming and reprinted with permission of the author, illustrator and Boys’ Life, published by the Boy Scouts of America.***





**Victory Trail Historic Trail Award-Boy Scouts**

I certify that Boy Scout Troop \_\_\_\_\_ of the \_\_\_\_\_ Council has completed the Victory Trail hike, and the Scouts and Scouters listed below have earned the Victory Trail Historic Trail Award.

The trail leader should mail the completed documents along with the application and the correct amount for the cost of the awards (\$10.00 per medal) with a check made out to Patriots' Path Council to:

**Victory Trail  
Patriots' Path Council  
1 Saddle Road  
Cedar Knolls, NJ 07927  
(973) 765-9322 ext. 253**

**Sellwise # 900907**

**You are welcome to email the information to [Brenda.Sonzogni@scouting.org](mailto:Brenda.Sonzogni@scouting.org) (call with a credit card) or you may fax the information to: (973) 267-3406 (call with a credit card).**

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I am enclosing \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (\$10.00 per medal) along with completed booklets for each award needed.

\_\_\_\_\_ I will pick up awards from the Patriots' Path Council Service Center.

\_\_\_\_\_ Please mail the Victory Trail Awards to:

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Boy Scouts and Scouters who have completed the requirements are:

- |          |           |
|----------|-----------|
| 1. _____ | 6. _____  |
| 2. _____ | 7. _____  |
| 3. _____ | 8. _____  |
| 4. _____ | 9. _____  |
| 5. _____ | 10. _____ |

Please write on the back if you need additional space.

