

2026 Annual Summit – April 16, 2026

Washington's Frontier & the Revolutionary War

The area of Washington's Trail, that Washington explored and traveled, became an important part of the Revolutionary War. In this 250th anniversary of our Nation, it is only fitting to discuss how Washington's humble career began on the Trail and influenced his leadership role as we became a nation. This year we will look at the people, places and things that helped Washington further evolve the fledgling army into a force to be reckoned with. The inhabitants and the frontier they guarded became an important part of Washington's success.

How well do you know the prices and values of trade goods? Come test your knowledge. We will have displays on trade during the 18th century as well as other historical items and site dioramas.

The Women of Washington's Continental Community - Heather Schneider

Washington created a continental community that was a crucial support for the army. These members came from the frontier and back country communities to support their loved ones. This community often included women, "a necessary evil" and their role became very important to the army being able to function. Their different roles and importance will be discussed. Heather is a Living Historian and 18th century cooking presenter.

Heather Schneider has been an educator for 34 years for Panama Central School in Panama, NY. She holds a BS and MS in Special Education from Edinboro University of Pennsylvania. She has been re-enacting for 38 years. She gives demonstrations of Open Hearth Cooking at historical sites such as Fort LeBoeuf, Fort Niagara and Pricketts Fort in West Virginia. She was an Artist in Residence at Pricketts Fort demonstrating Hearth cooking and has also spoken at The School of the Longhunter at Pricketts Fort. Her research focuses on Foodways and life in the Colonial Backcountry. She, along with her husband Bill were Volunteers of the Year at Pricketts Fort in 2022. She is also a published author and a member of The Fort LeBoeuf Historical Society, The Compagnie LeBoeuf French and Indian War group and also the 13th Virginia, West Augusta Battalion Revolutionary War group. She and her husband live in Panama, NY and have two adult children.



Heather Schneider

The Fur Trade in the Colonial Fort Pitt Region - Duane Shrecengost



Duane will give attendees a look at the trade on the evolving frontier that Washington explored. He will address the trade from Fort Pitt which developed into an important commerce hub. Washington understood the importance and need to secure the trade.

Duane Schrecengost is an Eighteenth Century Historian with 35 years of experience working with Living History programming, documentary film consultation, museum exhibits and education programming.

Duane Schrecengost

Simon Girty: A Man between Cultures/Rogue Along the Frontier - Nathan Kobuck

As a young boy, Girty was captured and raised by the Seneca. He became fluent in their language, customs, and skills. Returning home, he became a scout, interpreter and messenger for Lord Dunmore. As the tensions rose between continentals and the British, Girty became disillusioned with the continentals and became part of the British Indian department during the revolutionary war. Simon Girty became caught in the middle of the cultures at war.

Nathan Kobuck is an avid 18th century research scholar and living historian. He has consulted with Fort Pitt on displays and worked on the *War That Made America* documentary project. Nathan is currently a staff writer for *Muzzleloader* magazine writing about 18th century topics.



Nathan Kobuck

Road Builder in Chief - Brady Crytzer



Brady Crytzer

From 1753-1796, George Washington was an innovative visionary of American Infrastructure. First as a surveyor, then as a soldier, and finally as President, George Washington always believed that America's future was in the west, and roads were the key.

Brady J. Crytzer is the winner of the 2023 Judge Robert K. Woltz History Award. A specialist of the Frontier History of North America, Crytzer is an Associate Editor of the *Journal of the American Revolution*, and regularly appears on Fox News, NBC Peacock, C-Span, and Sirius XM. In 2026, he was named a Fellow at the Royal Society of Arts in London. His work has been featured in *The Washington Post*, *The Wall Street Journal*, Sirius XM, and *USA Today*. Crytzer's book, *The Whiskey Rebellion: A Distilled History of an American Crisis*, was listed as one of "Ten Books to Read" by the *Wall Street Journal* in 2023.

Defending the Western Frontier - Alan Kraus

Washington always kept his eye on the British and their movements in the Western frontier. He ordered the building of 2 key forts to serve as support for the troops entering the western campaign. So was the birth of the Forts McIntosh and Laurens. This was also a time when those who were called to fight in the East were sent back to their home area to define the frontier.



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