

# Battle of Iron Works Hill to be recreated in Mt. Holly Saturday

By: Rose Krebs Burlington County Times



MOUNT HOLLY — The Hessians and Colonists once again will do battle downtown on Saturday.

The 234th anniversary celebration of the Battle of Iron Works Hill, complete with battle re-enactment, will be held from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Admission to all activities is free and some businesses will offer discounts to re-enactors.

The battle was historically significant as Hessian troops who took part were unable to make it up to Trenton to confront George Washington's forces.

"We didn't win the battle, but we won the war," said Alicia McShulkis, co-chairwoman of the event. "This was a turning point in the Revolutionary War. It helped boost morale."

Although Colonial forces ended up losing the skirmish at Iron Works Hill, subsequent victories at Trenton and Princeton were key to the war effort.

"They were starving and starting to desert," McShulkis said. "There is only one place where the Battle of Iron Works happened and it was in Mount Holly. We should be proud (of its historical significance)."

One of the great mysteries of the battle — why Hessian Count Carl von Donop stayed behind for days — will be discussed. McShulkis said longtime speculation is that von Donop was romancing a local woman, a widow it's believed, at the time.

At 11 a.m. at The Bookery at 20 White St., McShulkis will offer a theory about who the woman was, based on the research of some local historians. And no, it is not Betsy Ross as some have speculated.

As always, history will be re-created during the day, with the Colonial forces encamped in Mill Race Village and British forces stationed at the Burlington County Prison Museum. Troops in full uniform and with replica firearms will face off in the streets downtown.

Of special significance this year will be a flag-raising ceremony of a reproduction of the first national banner, created by the Bergen County Historical Society. The society intends to fly the flag over every historic battleground and site in the 13 colonies, with Mount Holly being one of the first stops.

A place and time for the flag raising are still being determined.

There will be numerous historic demonstrations at both encampments, including 18th-century field cooking and a military surgeon.

At noon, re-enactor Noah Lewis will present Edward "Ned" Hector, a free black man from Conshohocken, Pa., who became a soldier, wagoner and war hero, at the Historic Brainerd Street Schoolhouse.

At 4 p.m., Lewis will lead "Dancing With the Stars (and Stripes) in 1776" at Red, White and Brew, 33 High St.

McShulkis said the re-enactment will not include cannon fire this year, but will include musket fire and a demonstration of a 100-caliber wall gun, which was commonly used in fortifications and on naval ships.

Other special events include a holiday train show at St. Andrew's Episcopal Church on High Street; a beer tasting at Red, White and Brew; and a wreath-making workshop at the Mount Holly Library, 397 High St. The cost is \$10 for the wreath, ribbon and materials. To register, call 609-267-7111 or visit [www.ironworkshill.org](http://www.ironworkshill.org).

Guided tours of the schoolhouse, prison museum and Friends Meetinghouse at High and Garden streets will be offered. For more information and a schedule of events, visit [www.ironworkshill.org](http://www.ironworkshill.org).

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