

Summit City Council Presentation

9/4/18

**Summit Revolutionary War Beacon**

- **My name is John Kieser.**
- **I am a member of the Summit Planning Board, SAR & Summit Historical Society**
- **Early in the morning of June 6, 1780, 238 years ago, there was an incredible cannon blast emanating from the hills of Summit. The blast was heard all the way to George Washington's Continental troops in Morristown and to the waterfront in Elizabeth, just south of today's Newark Airport.**
- **The sky was also lite up with a major fire signal beacon, also seen as noted above.**
- **New Jersey was under an invasion by 6,000 British troops and their Hessian mercenaries who were stationed in New York City. They had just landed in Elizabeth, just south of today's Newark Airport.**
- **The blast and beacon fire were alarms that were emanating from the Summit Revolutionary War Beacon, located at what today is 226 Hobart Ave, at the corner Beacon Road (appropriately named) and Hobart Ave.**
- **The alarms were sounded to alert the local New Jersey Minute Men who lived in the area and George Washington's Continental Army, camped out at Jockey Hollow. The British are coming!!!!**
- **The cannon was nicknamed "Old Sow" and the fire emanated from a major pile of logs and brush, created by the local Militia as ordered by George Washington.**
- **The goal of the invasion was Washington's troops and supplies at Jockey Hollow.**
- **To get to Jockey Hollow at Morristown, they had to go through: ~~Elizabethport, now known as Elizabeth~~  
~~Connecticut Farms, now known as Union,~~  
~~The Spring Fields, now known as Springfield~~  
And Summit, which at that time was part of the Spring Fields,  
And ultimately the Hobart Gap --**
- **As a direct result of these alarms, as issued at the Summit Beacon, the local Militia, and George Washington's Continental troops, were able to turn back the first invasion just past the Connecticut Farms Presbyterian Church.**

- **Unfortantantly the church and most of the village** was burnt to the ground by the British and they also murdered **Hannah Caldwell, the wife of James Caldwell, the Rebel Preacher.**
- **2.5 weeks later the Old Sow and Bonfire** were used again when a 2<sup>nd</sup> attempt by the British and Hessians was defeated at Springfield, site of the Presbyterian Church.
- The Summit Beacon was again resurrected for the **British War of 1812**, in the year of 1814, but never used.
- **If you look at the Summit logo**, it is a direct representation of the Summit Beacon.
- If you look at the **shoulder patch** of all Summit Police officers, there is a representation of the Old Sow Cannon and Beacon.
- **The Battle of Springfield** is sometimes referred to as the **Forgotten Victory**, but the battle is distinctly remembered every day, in **Summit.**
- **My associates and I are giving a detailed presentation on the Summit Beacon on Tuesday, Sept 25, at the Summit YMCA. The presentation is free.**