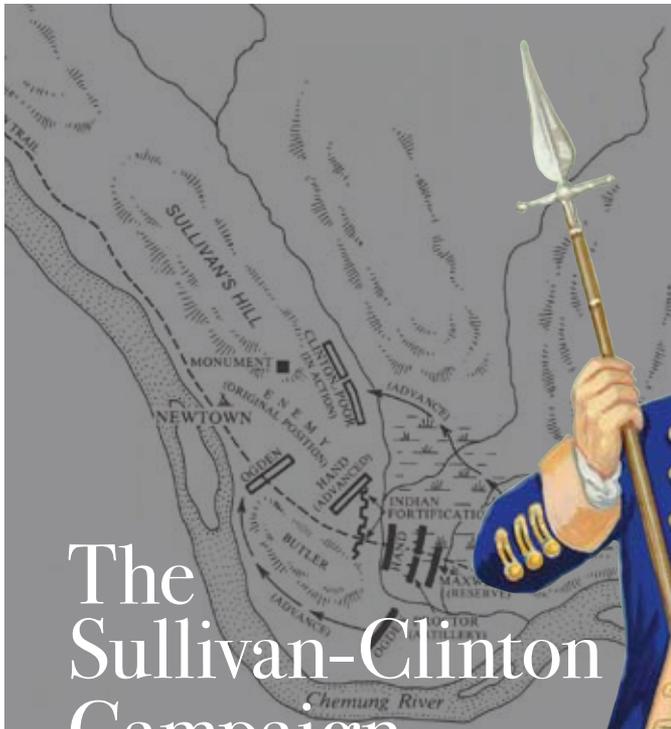
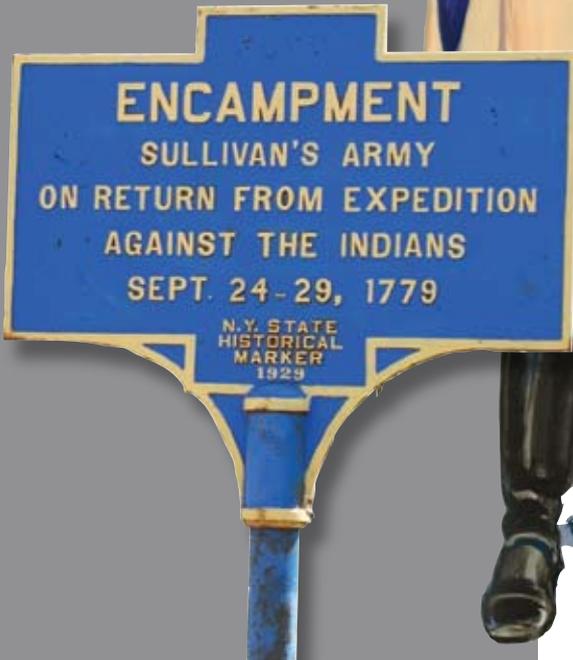


**BATTLE OF  
NEWTOWN**  
August 29, 1779



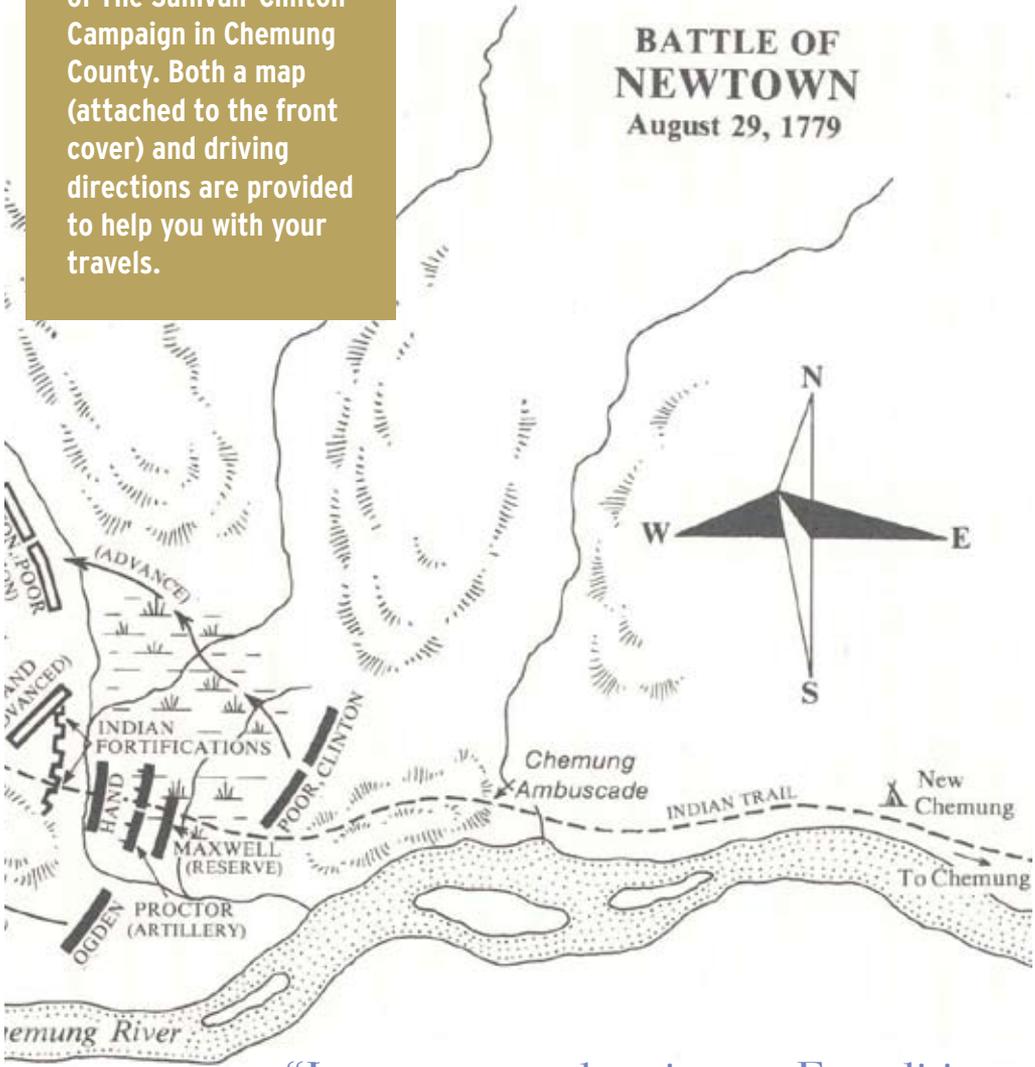
# The Sullivan-Clinton Campaign in Chemung County



The following is a driving guide to be use for your exploration of The Sullivan-Clinton Campaign in Chemung County. Both a map (attached to the front cover) and driving directions are provided to help you with your travels.

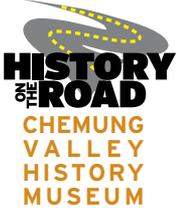
# BATTLE OF NEWTOWN

August 29, 1779



“I am very apprehensive our Expedition will not appear in History.”

— The Revolutionary Diary of Lieutenant Obadiah Gore, Jr., participant in the Sullivan Expedition



# 1. Starting Point

- The starting point for your tour is the Chemung Valley History Museum at 415 East Water Street, Elmira.

# 2. “Encampment”

- **Begin your tour by turning left onto Water St. out of the Chemung Valley History Museum parking lot.**
- **After traveling 0.7 of a mile, you will see the “Encampment” marker on your right.**
- After the campaign, Sullivan and his army encamped here from September 24 through September 29. The encampment spanned between twenty and thirty acres and included over 4,000 men and their equipment.



# 3. “Old Chemung”

- **Continue down Water Street for 0.2 miles and merge onto the Route 17/I-86 East entrance ramp on the right.**
- After traveling 5.2 miles on Rt.17/ I-86 East, you can see the “hogback” ridge on your right, just west of the Lowman exit.
- **You will remain on Rt. 17/I-86 East for 10.5 miles and will get off at Exit 59, to Chemung.**
- Take a left at the end of the exit ramp onto Wyncoop Creek Road.



- **Travel 0.4 miles and turn right at the stop sign to head east on County Route 60.** On your immediate right will be the “Old Chemung” marker.
- Old Chemung was an Indian village that Sullivan’s troops destroyed on August 13, 1779. Old Chemung was mostly abandoned at the time of the Revolutionary War. Most of the inhabitants of the village had moved several miles west to a village called “New Chemung.” Sullivan’s troops also skirmished with the Native Americans at New Chemung on August 13.
- **Travel 0.1 miles more down the road. Turn right into the post office parking lot, so that you can turn around and head west onto County Route 60.**
- **Turn left out of the post office parking lot.** Now you are heading west on County Route 60.

#### 4. “Sullivan Road”

- **Continuing 0.2 miles from the post office, you will see the Chemung Speedrome on your right.**

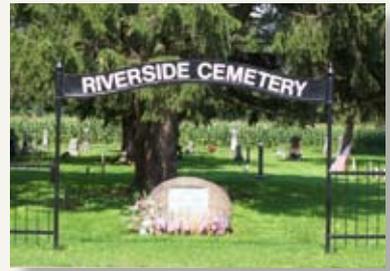


- To the west of the Speedrome, ahead of you on your right, you can see the hill that cut off the route along the river that Sullivan’s army followed while marching toward Newtown. Instead, Sullivan was forced to cut a road up and over the hill, slowing his progress.
- **Travel 0.1 miles further and you will see this path marked by an historic marker.** “Sullivan Road” forks off County Route 60, to the right and continues up the hill.

- Today's modern road (County Route 60) cuts through this hill, which used to continue down to meet the river. Sullivan was not as fortunate.

## 5. Riverside Cemetery

- **Continue traveling 3.0 miles west down County Route 60 from the "Sullivan's Road" marker.**
- You will come to a small cemetery on the right and will be able to see the county landfill in the background.
- Riverside Cemetery is significant because there are several Revolutionary War soldiers buried there.
- It is in this general area where scholars believe the Native American village of New Chemung existed.



## 6. Ambush (Reed's Tavern)

- **Travel 0.4 miles further, and pull into the gravel parking area behind Reed's Tavern, on your left.**
- Slightly northwest of the tavern, during the Continental Army's raid on the village of New Chemung, the Native Americans lured a small party of thirty Continental soldiers, and ambushed them.

## 7. The Swamp

- **Drive 1.2 miles further down County Route 60. You will see the "George Lowman House" on the right.**

- 0.1 miles from the George Lowman house are remnants of a swamp.
- This is the swamp that Generals Poor and Clinton crossed when flanking the enemy. Some estimate that there were a couple of miles of swampy land here during the time of the Revolutionary War.

## 8. “The Rifle Corps”

- **From the swamp, continue west on County Route 60.**



- **After 0.1 miles**, you will see a marker representing General Hand’s rifle unit that was sent out to scout the enemy a day before the Battle of Newtown took place.
- The marker is on your left, across the street from a white church.

## 9. Baldwin Creek

- **You will travel 0.1 miles over a small bridge where you can see Baldwin Creek.**

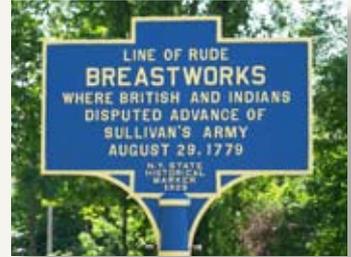


- **Look to your right.** On the right is Baldwin Creek where Ogden’s men were sent to surprise the enemy. The British and Native Americans built breastworks just west of Baldwin Creek, roughly following the line of the creek, stretching for approximately half a mile to one mile.

## 10. “Breastworks”

- **Travel 0.1 miles until you come to a Park and Ride lot on your left.**

- **Pull into the Park and Ride lot.**
- There, you can view the marker for the line of “Breastworks” created to trap Sullivan and his men. The breastworks ran parallel to Baldwin Creek and Route 17 (*see map*).
- You can also see a stone marker, on the west side of the lot, documenting the Battle of Newtown.
- \* The Battlefield
- If you were to turn left out of the Park and Ride lot and continue traveling west on County Route 60, you would approach the area where most of the battle occurred. Today, that area is private property.
- The main area of the battlefield stretches from Baldwin Creek, west along County Route 60 until the road dead ends.



## II. “This Ridge”

- **Turn left out of the Park and Ride lot and immediately turn left onto County Route 8.**
- **Travel 0.2 miles down County Route 8, over Route 17.**
- **On your right, you will see a gravel turn-around. Pull into this turn-around to view the marker.**
- “This Ridge” denotes the “hogback” you passed earlier while driving east on Route 17.



- While the marker claims that the British fortified the ridge, some scholars today believe this to be untrue.
- **Turn left out of the turn-around area, back onto County Route 8.**
- **Travel 0.1 miles and turn left to merge onto Route 17 West, toward Elmira.**

## 12. To Newtown Battlefield State Park (open May through October)

- Travel 2.0 miles along Route 17 West.
- You will see signs for Newtown Battlefield/ Newtown Battlefield Historic Site. Soon after these signs is the park.
- Turn right into Newtown Battlefield State Park.



- Travel up the hill, passing through the stop sign at Oneida Road.
- **Travel 1.5 miles up to the top of the hill;** follow the road around the large obelisk monument. On the other side of the monument, continue straight toward the overlook (the wood deck structure).

## 13. Obelisk

- **Walk to the top of the hill,** where the tall granite monument stands.
- The obelisk has two plaques. One plaque

commemorates the Battle of Newtown and the other indicates that the battlefield has been designated as a Registered National Historic Landmark (NHL). The state park property does not fall within the NHL battlefield boundaries.

## 14. Memorial to Major General John Sullivan

- **As you walk back to the overlook,** you will pass a stone monument placed in the park by the State of New Hampshire, in memory of John Sullivan.



## 15. Back to the Chemung Valley History Museum

- **Proceed back down the hill.**
- **Turn right to merge onto Route 17/I-86 West toward Elmira.**
- **Get off of Exit 56 to Elmira/Jerusalem Hill. At the top of the exit ramp, turn left onto Water Street.**
- Travel 0.9 miles to the Chemung Valley History Museum.
- **The Chemung Valley history Museum will be at 415 E. Water Street.** Turn right into the parking lot. We invite you to visit our museum shop for more resources on the Sullivan Campaign.

# Patriotic Profiles: Chemung County in the Revolutionary War

**I**n the first part of 1779 General George Washington formulated a strategy from his Middlebrook, New Jersey headquarters for the upcoming year. While General Cornwallis and his troops fought the Revolutionary War in the southern colonies, General Washington planned to fracture the English and Iroquois alliance in New York State.

**I**n the previous year, 1778, the English and Iroquois enacted two massacres on white settlers. The first campaign, on July 31, 1778, took place at the Wyoming Valley in Pennsylvania, where 700 British, Indian, and Tory troops led by Major John Butler, a Tory leader and the Seneca Chief Sayenwaraghton, slayed 150 men and destroyed the valley. Later, in November that same year an attacking force of 800 British, Indian, and Tory troops descended on Fort Alden in Cherry Valley, New York, resulting in forty-five killed, most of whom were women and children, and forty-five taken prisoner, as well as the destruction of the surrounding village.



*Major John Butler*

## **The attacks of 1778 prompted General Washington to seek retribution upon the Iroquois for their support of and alliance with the British.**

He intended to end the Indian menace that was plaguing New York and Pennsylvania. Washington's plan called for the immediate destruction of the Iroquois villages, crops and food—their way of living. He aimed to cut off the Indians' resources and push them back to Fort Niagara in hopes that they might become a burden to the British.

With General Washington and his plan now firmly concentrated on “the Indian” problem, he gave command of the expedition to General John Sullivan. On May 7, 1779 General Sullivan assembled his men at Easton, Pennsylvania. On July 29, 1779 General Sullivan arrived at Wyoming, Pennsylvania and stayed there until July 31 when he began his march toward Tioga, Pennsylvania (later Sullivan's army built a fort at Tioga and called it “Fort Sullivan”), where the Chemung River meets the Susquehanna River, to enact General Washington's plan for the Indians.

On August 12, Sullivan sent most of his army up the Chemung River to attack the Native Americans at their village of New Chemung. On the morning of August 13, the army burned about thirty buildings and the natives lured a smaller party of about 30 soldiers into an ambush. In the skirmish with about fifty Native Americans, three officers, and six soldiers died. By the time the army headed back to Fort Sullivan that afternoon, they had destroyed about forty acres of corn.

## **Per orders from General Washington, General James Clinton and his troops traveled from the Mohawk Valley in New**



## York down along the Susquehanna River to rendezvous with General Sullivan's army at Tioga.

They arrived at Fort Sullivan on August 22, 1779. Now over 4,000 strong, General Sullivan had a complete force to implement Washington's plan for the Indians. Sullivan's army consisted of four divisions, led by the following men:

**Brigadier General Maxwell commanded:**  
Four New Jersey regiments

**Brigadier General Enoch Poor commanded:**  
Three New Hampshire regiments  
One Massachusetts regiment

**Brigadier General Edward Hand commanded:**  
Two Pennsylvania regiments  
One artillery regiment  
One Pennsylvanian battalion  
Four units of Pennsylvanian riflemen  
Miscellaneous volunteers

**Brigadier General James Clinton commanded:**  
Four New York regiments  
One New York artillery detachment

Fully assembled, the army left Fort Sullivan on August 26, 1779. British Major John Butler wrote to the British at Fort Niagara that "the best of the Continental Troops commanded by the most active of the Rebel Generals," were on their way to New York. Butler and his men planned to encounter Sullivan and his army and destroy them before they got too deep into Indian Territory.<sup>1</sup>

By August 27, the beginning of harvest season, Sullivan and his men reached the remains of New Chemung, the Indian village they had burned and destroyed on August 13.

---

<sup>1</sup> Major John Butler to Colonel Mason Bolton, August 26, 1779, Public Archives of Canada, as quoted in Barbara Graymont, *The Iroquois in the American Revolution* (Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse University Press, 1972), 209.

**As Sullivan moved through the territory, his army seized what food they could use from the local crops and destroyed the rest, cutting off food supplies from the Indians and the British.**

Sullivan's arrival into the Chemung Valley was no surprise to the Indians and the British. Both groups expected that there would be a campaign against them, but they did not expect the magnitude of Sullivan's army. **The**

**Sullivan-Clinton Campaign was the most significant of 1779, encompassing over 20% of the Continental Army.**

As Sullivan encroached further into the Chemung Valley, along the Chemung River, Butler and Brant prepared to defend against all odds. On August 26, British Major Butler and Chief Brant chose a site near the village of Newtown (in present-day Chemung County) to ambush Sullivan and defend their territory. Near Newtown lay the trail that Sullivan would travel with his army along the Chemung River. Butler's and Brant's combined forces, about 600 men strong, constructed breastworks (fortifications) along a natural ridge parallel to the Chemung River, about a half a mile long, and perpendicular to the ridge facing Baldwin Creek.

On August 28, Sullivan sent out a scouting party, which reported fires used by an enemy encampment. On



*Brigadier General James Clinton*

the morning of August 29, Sullivan gave the command for a rifleman unit to approach the trail, while Major Butler and his men watched and waited. As the unit approached the enemy breastworks, they overestimated the enemy at about 1,500 men strong. General Hand's light troops rushed to the front to aid the riflemen who skirmished with the Indians. When Sullivan arrived on scene he ordered General Poor's and General Clinton's brigades to flank the Indians' left and circle around and approach at their rear. Meanwhile General Hand would engage the Indian and British front. Sullivan left General Maxwell's brigade in reserve.

General Sullivan planned to hold back his artillery until Generals Poor and Clinton were in position behind the enemy. Sullivan ordered Poor to make an assault on the Indians' left flank, around the breastworks, and move to the rear of the enemy. General Clinton was to follow General Poor as a reserve force and protective guard. General Hand would be positioned in front of the breastworks, facing the enemy head-on and backed by Maxwell's brigade. Sullivan stationed his artillery in front of the breastworks to preoccupy the enemy with cannon fire, while General Poor made his flanking move.

**However, Clinton and Poor's troops struggled through a mile of swamp, delaying their arrival. Before Poor and Clinton were in position, a cannonade of artillery began. The artillery exploded behind the Indians, leading them to believe they were surrounded. They began to retreat.** Hearing the guns, Poor and Clinton sped up their march. As they began to attack further back up the hill, the Continentals

ran into fierce opposition. While the front of the line exchanged volleys, the back began to prepare for a bayonet charge. They “advanced rapidly with fixed bayonet without firing a shot altho [sic] they kept a steady fire on us,” one member of Sullivan’s army wrote.<sup>2</sup> The Continentals approached the enemy from behind, encircled them, and forced a retreat, leaving Sullivan’s army with control over the battlefield.



When the battle ended, Sullivan had suffered three dead and thirty-nine wounded. The total numbers of enemy casualties were unknown. Major Butler estimated his losses at twenty-two: “of the Rangers we had five men killed or taken and three wounded, and of the Indians five killed and nine wounded.”<sup>3</sup> To ensure their enemy would not return to the area, American soldiers were set about the tasks of destroying Indian crops and burning native villages. They also scalped the dead warriors. As Sullivan’s army continued on their march north to Genesee—and back through the Chemung Valley in September—he experienced no other significant engagement with the enemy. On September 30, the army returned to Fort Sullivan in Pennsylvania, and celebrated their victory.

## **Historians now believe the American success at the Battle of Newtown aided significantly in removing the Native-**

<sup>2</sup> Journal of Lieutenant-Colonel Henry Dearborn, ed. Frederick Cook, *Journals of the Military Expedition of Major General John Sullivan Against the Six Nations of Indians in 1779*, (Auburn, N.Y.: Knapp, Peck and Thomson, 1887), 72.

<sup>3</sup> Major John Butler to Colonel Mason Bolton, August 31, 1779, Public Archives of Canada, as quoted in Barbara Graymont, *The Iroquois in the American Revolution* (Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse University Press, 1972), 213.

## **American threat from the western frontier, contributing to the ultimate victory over the British.**

In the 1783 peace treaty, the British ceded the contested Iroquois lands to the United States, which shocked the Iroquois, having always believed they were an independent nation. With the new gains from this treaty, New York gave parcels of land to soldiers who had fought the war. This action opened up the Chemung Valley to its first white settlements.

Today, a granite obelisk atop Newtown Battlefield State Park memorializes the Sullivan Campaign and the Battle of Newtown. Only a small portion of the park covers the area of the battlefield. In 1973, the United States government designated land within the actual boundaries of the battlefield as a National Historic Landmark.

## **Preserving Newtown Battlefield**

The biggest threat to Newtown is lack of knowledge. Most people are not aware that Sullivan's campaign was the most significant of 1779 and the largest battle of that campaign occurred here in Chemung County. Thanks to a generous Save Our History grant from the History Channel, we are better able to educate the public on the importance of Newtown Battlefield.

Some of the biggest threats to the battlefield site are commercial, industrial, and residential development. For example, the Chemung County Waste Site (ie: "the dump") is about one mile from the National Historic Landmark boundaries of Newtown Battlefield. The only way to ensure against future encroachment on the battlefield is to get active in the fight for its preservation.

Recently the National Park Service (NPS) investigated the importance of Newtown Battlefield as part of a larger study of

sites associated with the Revolutionary War and War of 1812. The NPS gave Newtown their highest priority ranking for significance and need for preservation. Out of 247 Revolutionary War and War of 1812 battlefields surveyed by the National Park Service, only six were singled out for potential study by Congress for inclusion in the National Park System. While the National Park Service can suggest eligibility studies for additions to the National Park System, only Congress can authorize those additions.

We need your help to save Newtown Battlefield for future generations. According to the National Park Service, only about 38 percent of Revolutionary War battlefields are in good condition, while more than 60 percent of these battlefields are in poor condition or are gone completely. Newtown battlefield has already been established as a National Historic Landmark. But Landmark status does not provide any physical protection of the site. If you would like to help with the preservation of Newtown Battlefield, please take a moment to contact the following people and express your interest in establishing Newtown Battlefield as part of the National Park System.

**Senator Charles Schumer**

313 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Phone: 202-224-6542

Fax: 202-228-3027

Web: <http://schumer.senate.gov/SchumerWebsite/contact/webform.cfm>

Or

15 Henry Street, Room M103

Binghamton, NY 13901

Phone: 607-772-6792

Fax: 607-772-8124

**Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton**

476 Russell Senate Office Building

Washington, DC 20510

Phone: 202-224-4451

Fax: 202-228-0282

Web Form: <http://clinton.senate.gov/contact>

Or

James M. Hanley Federal Building

100 South Clinton Street

P.O. Box 7378

Syracuse, NY 13261-7378

Phone: 315-448-0470  
Fax: 315-448-0476

**Congressman Randy Kuhl (29th District)**

1505 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515  
Phone: 202-225-3161  
Fax: 202-226-6599  
Web form: <http://www.house.gov/formkuhl/IMA/issue.htm>  
Or

P.O. Box 153  
22 Buell Street  
Bath, NY 14810  
Phone: 607-776-9142  
Fax: 607-776-9159

**Chemung County Executive Thomas J. Santulli**

P.O. Box 588  
John H. Hazlett Building  
203 Lake Street  
Elmira, NY 14902  
Phone: 607-737-2912  
Email: [tsantulli@co.chemung.ny.us](mailto:tsantulli@co.chemung.ny.us)

**To allow the Chemung County Historical Society to continue fighting for the preservation of Chemung County's history, we need your help. Please consider a tax-deductible donation to CCHS today. Send contributions to:**

**Chemung County Historical Society**

415 East Water Street  
Elmira, NY 14901  
Phone: 607-734-4167  
Email: [cchs@chemungvalleymuseum.org](mailto:cchs@chemungvalleymuseum.org)  
Web: [www.chemungvalleymuseum.org](http://www.chemungvalleymuseum.org)

*Patriotic Profiles: Chemung County in the Revolutionary War* was made possible by a Save Our History grant furnished by **The History Channel**. This project was completed by the Chemung Valley History Museum, Jeffrey J. Van Zile's Advanced Placement Government and Politics class at Horseheads Senior High School, and Time Warner Cable. A special thank you to:

**Horseheads Senior High School Students:**

**Brian Bonei**  
**Kyle Brautigan**  
**Luke Bunting**  
**Neil Button**  
**Katie Carr**  
**Caitlin Eusden**  
**Justin Gallagher**  
**Matt Hart**  
**Jeff Levels**  
**Matt Shiahhan**  
**Carolyn Pluchino**  
**Liz Robertson**  
**Jim Roemmelt**  
**Jessica Sano**  
**Sam Wolcott**  
**Dan Yuan**

Also, thank you to:

**Christine Capella-Peters, New York State Office of  
Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation**  
**Kelly Calnon Falck, Education Consultant**  
**Paul Hawke, Chief, American Battlefield Protection  
Program, National Park Service**  
**Gage Weekes, Save Our History**  
**Horseheads Central School District Transportation  
Department**  
**Paul Perine, Chemung Valley Living History Center**  
**Ron Remy, Consultant**  
**Rebecca Smith, Museum Educator, Chemung Valley  
History Museum**  
**David Whalen, Time Warner Cable**  
**Amy Wilson, Director, Chemung Valley History Museum**

**HISTORY**  
**ON THE**  
**ROAD**  
CHEMUNG  
VALLEY  
HISTORY  
MUSEUM

