



GRAND COMMANDERY OF KNIGHTS TEMPLAR FOR THE STATE OF NEW JERSEY

JULY 2026 MESSAGE
SK GEORGE R. SAUNDERS REGC

New Jersey in the American Revolution

On July 4, 1776, in Philadelphia, the thirteen American colonies declared independence from England. Many books have been written covering all the facets leading to this decision and the participation of Masonic brethren has been well documented. I would like to offer a brief sketch of New Jersey's part with an emphasis on southern New Jersey. New Jersey played a pivotal role during the American Revolution due to its strategic location between New York and Philadelphia and earned the nickname "The Crossroads of the American Revolution" because of the sheer number of engagements that took place within its borders. The state was the site of several key battles, including the famous Battle of Trenton and the Battle of Princeton, both of which significantly boosted American morale. Southern New Jersey was also the site of several significant military engagements and skirmishes. These included the Battle of Quinton's Bridge, fought on March 18, 1778, near Salem, which helped disrupt British operations in the area, and the Battle of Fort Mercer, fought on October 22, 1777, in Red Bank which resulted in heavy Hessian losses. Southern New Jersey also experienced numerous smaller skirmishes, raids, and acts of sabotage. Its towns and countryside saw frequent troop movements, skirmishes, and shifting control between British and Continental forces. The region's rivers and marshes often provided cover for guerrilla-style tactics, making it a contested area throughout the war. The local population was deeply divided, with Patriots and Loyalists often clashing and vying for control of resources and strategic positions. Despite hardship, New Jersey contributed troops, supplies, and vital intelligence that helped the Continental Army achieve ultimate victory. While not the site of large-scale battles, southern New Jersey contributed to the American war effort through its persistent local resistance and strategic importance.

Happy Birthday, America!

SK George R. Saunders, REGC
Grand Commandery of New Jersey

Yours in Christ

SK George R. Saunders

Right Eminent Grand Commander

