

2009 March 30

Greetings to the W3R-USA from the Cranston Historical Society,

Congratulations on the passage of this bill and the signing today at the White House. Here in Rhode Island we have followed your site with interest. It is the only news we have of this historic trail.

It was from your website that we learned of the passage and the signing today. Because of this news the 3rd graders who visit our Rochambeau era historic Joy Homestead celebrated with zest the new national trail that will be going by the Joy Homestead. They signed a document that I will be sending to Senator Whitehouse. The kids are thrilled and knew about the trail. The kids have been coming to the Joy Homestead to learn local history for over 25 years and some of them know the story of the French march from their parents who visited before them.

You may remember I contacted you some time ago with questions about the trail. Well now that is law and so far as we know it will go by our historic Joy Homestead we want you to know that our Joy Homestead and the Cranston Historical Society would like to be considered for your list of sites in Rhode Island. It was there in 1781 and part of the road the French marched on is our property. For the last four years we celebrated June 18th quietly with an open house. Last year we had a strawberry biscuit tea which was well attended. This year we will do the same and have invited our new mayor to attend.

We would like to be involved and want to know what can we do to help with the advancement of the W3R trail. Please feel free if your travels bring you to Rhode Island to stop in and visit 'our quiet corner'. We have the Joy Homestead and their in law house, the Westcott House on the same plot of land. It is a private house as is the Sheldon House about a half mile heading west and the Knight Farm remains much the same as it did then.

I believe the road that lead to Major Thomas Fenner House (1677) would have been part of the trail in 1781 but progress has moved that way out of the way. It was across from the Joy Homestead. The Fenner's, Joy's and Westcotts were relatives.

That's our quiet part of the trail. We do [sic, insert "not"] have the flash of Newport but we love what we have. We do our Rhode Island DOT signs! Thanks for your news on your website and congratulations again on your success! I know you must be thrilled.

--- Lydia Rapoza Cranston Historical Society

Note: The Joy Homestead is located at 156 Scituate Ave. in Cranston, Rhode Island (along Route 12). See www.cranstonhistoricalsociety.org/joy.html