

CAPTAIN NATHAN HALE (1755-1776) A CELEBRATED ICON OF THE REVOLUTIONARY WAR

In the spring of 1776, the Continental Army moved forces to Manhattan to prevent the British from taking control of New York City. General George Washington asked for a volunteer to spy on the British after the Americans lost the Battle of Long Island in August 1776, i.e. after the British invasion. Nathan Hale, seeing the assignment as a patriotic opportunity, volunteered on September 8, 1776.

Disguised as a Dutch school teacher, the Yale University educated Hale slipped behind British lines on the shores of Huntington Bay. He successfully gathered information about British troop movements. While Hale was behind enemy lines, the British took control of Manhattan on September 15, 1776. Then on September 20, 1776, the Great New York Fire destroyed a significant portion of Manhattan. After the fire, British soldiers were put on high alert for sympathizers to the Patriot cause. Nearly 200 American Partisans were arrested by the British. The following evening on September 21, 1776, Hale was captured sailing on the Long Island Sound trying to cross back into American controlled territory.

Upon capture, he was transported to British headquarters in New York where he was interrogated by British General William Howe. Physical evidence including sketches of British fortifications and notations of numbers and positions was found on Hale thus incriminating him as a spy. General Howe ordered his immediate execution and legend holds when asked if he had any last words, Hale replied with the now famous words "I only regret that I have but one life to give for my country".

Patriot spy, Nathan Hale was hanged by the British the morning of September 22, 1776. He was just 21 years old. Hale is considered to be an American hero for his dedication to his country and willingness to make the ultimate sacrifice on behalf of his beliefs. His passion and commitment to the cause of independence inspired many of his compatriots and earned him a place in American history as a hero of the American Revolution.

FIRST AMERICAN SPY



Huntington's Nathan Hale statue is a model of the 13-foot bronze sculpted by Frederick MacMonnies that stands opposite New York City Hall.

HALE IN HUNTINGTON: In 1893, Frederick MacMonnie's 13 foot tall bronze statue of Nathan Hale was dedicated in New York's City Hall Park. Huntingtonians felt that a memorial should also be placed in Huntington since the shores of Huntington Bay are where Nathan Hale began his spying mission in September 1776. Two memorials were erected. On Main Street, you can find a large marble shaft in front of the *Soldiers & Sailors Memorial Building* and on Mill Dam Road a large granite boulder stands near the shore of Huntington Bay where Hale crossed enemy lines during the Revolution. In addition, the Town of Huntington owns a small copy of MacMonnies bronze statue which is kept in the Town Clerk's archives and is on display for public viewing once a year during the week of July 4th.

Nathan Hale Trail

Town of Huntington
Long Island, New York



“I only regret that I have but one life to give for my country.”

Nathan Hale
September 1776

A WALK INTO HISTORY

The Nathan Hale Trail is a ten mile hike through the Town of Huntington that begins at The Arsenal on Park Avenue. This mostly urban hike is witness to many historical landmarks, which are listed below. In addition, there is a section of the trail that runs through the scenic Greenbelt Trail (behind the Cold Spring Harbor Library). The trail ends at the West Hills Country Park. We hope to see you out there.

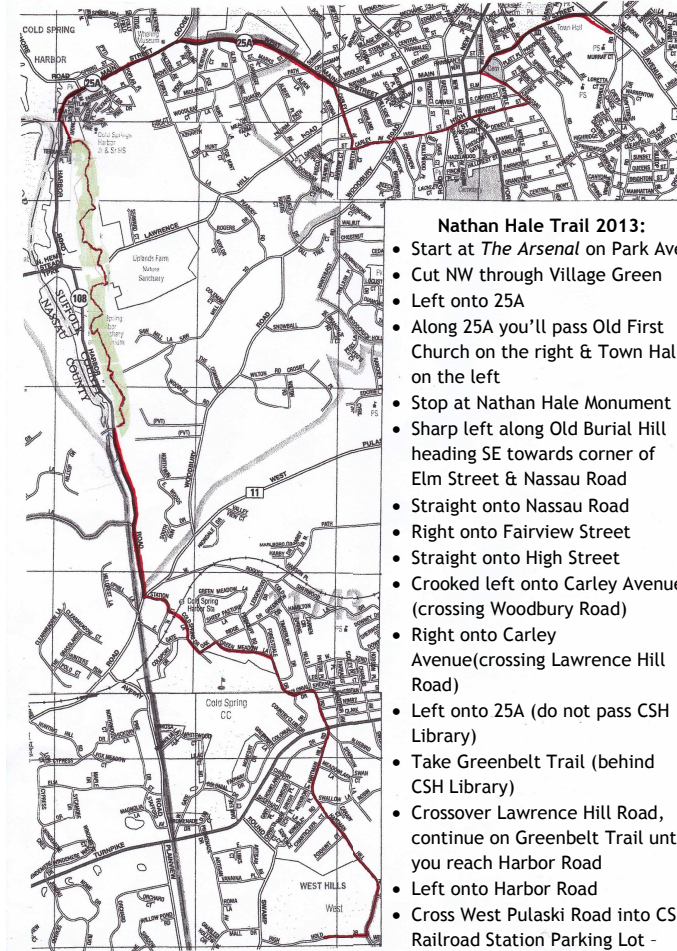
- The Arsenal
- Old First Church
- Town Hall War Memorial
- Thimble Factory
- Old Burial Hill
- Soldiers & Sailors Memorial
- Nathan Hale Memorial
- Conklin House
- DNA Learning Center
- Whaling Museum
- Oheka Castle
- Hartman Hill
- Colyer House



*Nathan Hale Memorial
Main Street, Huntington Village.*

TRAIL MAP

Be sure to be safe while hiking: stay on sidewalks, when you can, and within the shoulder to avoid oncoming traffic.



Nathan Hale Trail 2013:

- Start at *The Arsenal* on Park Ave.
- Cut NW through Village Green
- Left onto 25A
- Along 25A you'll pass Old First Church on the right & Town Hall on the left
- Stop at Nathan Hale Monument
- Sharp left along Old Burial Hill heading SE towards corner of Elm Street & Nassau Road
- Straight onto Nassau Road
- Right onto Fairview Street
- Straight onto High Street
- Crooked left onto Carley Avenue (crossing Woodbury Road)
- Right onto Carley Avenue (crossing Lawrence Hill Road)
- Left onto 25A (do not pass CSH Library)
- Take Greenbelt Trail (behind CSH Library)
- Crossover Lawrence Hill Road, continue on Greenbelt Trail until you reach Harbor Road
- Left onto Harbor Road
- Cross West Pulaski Road into CSH Railroad Station Parking Lot - cross over footbridge
- Take Cold Spring Lane
- Left onto E. Gate Drive
- Left onto Oak Ridge Drive
- Right onto Green Meadow Lane
- Right onto Forestdale Drive
- Left onto Colonial Drive
- Right onto Cold Spring Hills Road (crossing Jericho Turnpike)
- Veer right onto Hartman Hill Rd.
- Right onto High Hold Drive
- End at *West Hills Country Park*

Phone: (631) 351 3244
E-mail: historian@HuntingtonNY.gov

QUESTIONNAIRE

Answer the questions below as you hike the Nathan Hale Trail and receive a Patch for your achievement!

1. What was The Arsenal originally used for?

2. To whom is the flagpole in front of Town Hall dedicated?

3. Where did Huntington's earliest Church stand and in what years?

4. In what year was the Nathan Hale Memorial (marble shaft) erected and in front of what building was it placed?

5. Name three historical sites in the Village of Cold Spring Harbor.

6. Name the birthplace of Silas Woods, L.I. historian and Congressman 1817-27?

7. What house was built in 1819 by Walt Whitman's father?

To receive your patch, please send in your completed questionnaire along with a self-addressed envelope to:

TOWN OF HUNTINGTON

c/o Town Historian Robert Hughes
228 Main Street
Huntington, NY 11743