

Jotham Bemis
July 4, 2013

Hi and welcome to our 10th consecutive citizenship ceremony! My name is Tom Dunne, President of the Saratoga Battle Chapter, Sons of the American Revolution.

My ancestor, Jotham Bemus was a landowner and a tavern keeper here; these heights are named for him. His house was burned by British forces and his wife Tryphena and daughter Sally, from whom I descend, are said to have lived in their barn during a severe winter. Jotham and Tryphena also had three sons who served with the American's. Jotham, Jr. received the badge of merit from George Washington on January 15, 1783 not far from here. Sons William and John also served. Although young John served as a teamster and drove a wagon full of British supplies to Albany after the surrender at Schuylerville. Sally recounted to a grandson that she sat on these heights and watched as the British were marched to Albany after the surrender and remarked how nice their uniforms were.

I am proud to have a family history that connects me to Bemis Heights. This park is full of scenic beauty and rich in history. Without this victory the American Revolution very well might have been a lost. The victory here is often referred to as the "Turning Point of the American Revolution". Today is America's Birthday for on July 4th 237 years ago the Declaration of Independence was signed.

As one of many who help make this event possible I am prouder still that on these scenic and hallowed grounds, on America's Birthday, we gather to celebrate you, our newest citizens. On behalf of all who partner to put this event on congratulations and welcome to America!