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THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION INSTITUTE

**News, Events, and Commentary
from the American Revolution Institute
of the Society of the Cincinnati**

today

December 1, 2022

[Calendar of Events](#)

This Month in Revolutionary History - Washington Resigns His Commission



On December 23, 1783, at 12 p.m., General George Washington entered the Senate Chamber of the State House in Annapolis, Maryland—Congress having met there since November 26. Washington was there to resign his commission, to transfer the command of the army to the same body that provided him that power some eight years earlier. In a short address, Washington discussed a job accomplished, a war won, and gave his thanks to “Providence” and his “countrymen.” In ending his speech, Washington said: “I retire from the great theatre of Action; and bidding an Affectionate farewell to this August body under whose orders I have so long acted, I here offer my Commission, and take my leave of all the employments of public life.”

With this act of selflessness, Washington lived up to the ideals of the Society of the Cincinnati, formed just seven months earlier in May 1783. The Society’s namesake and inspiration was Lucius Quinctius Cincinnatus, a fifth century BC Roman politician who, after defeating an opposing army, handed power to the senate and returned home to his estate. Two days after Washington himself handed back power, he returned to his home of Mount Vernon, just in time for Christmas Day.

Our Featured Story - Giving Tuesday Celebrates Our Library's 50th Anniversary

It's not too late to make a Giving Tuesday gift! Our research library celebrates its 50th anniversary in 2023. That's fifty years of collecting and sharing the important stories of the American Revolution, of inspiring countless scholars, researchers, historians, and others interested in the revolutionary era, and of fostering serious scholarship, including a robust research fellowship program that was launched in 2007.

Our library remains one of the most important resources in the United States for advanced study on the Revolution. It houses more than fifty thousand rare books, manuscripts, prints, broadsides, maps, and



modern reference sources. These materials are available in our reading room to researchers and a portion of them are on our [Digital Library](#).

Consider a gift for general library support to help with immediate needs of the library or to the Ellen McCallister Clark Library Endowment, established recently in honor of our longtime library director, to ensure the library's resources and programs are available to the public for the next fifty years... and beyond!

[Donate to our research library](#)

[Learn more about our research library](#)

EVENTS

Groundbreaking Discovery at Red Bank Battlefield Park



Join us on Wednesday, December 7 at 6:30 p.m. EST for a lecture featuring historical archaeologist Wade P. Catts discussing his team's recent groundbreaking archaeological discovery at Red Bank Battlefield Park, N.J.

For nearly a decade, Red Bank Battlefield Park has been the focus of a series of archaeological studies investigating the Hessian attack on Fort Mercer on October 22, 1777, during the Philadelphia campaign. During a public archaeology program conducted in the summer of 2022, a mass burial space was discovered and is thought to contain remains of Hessian soldiers who lost their lives in the attack. Catts, lead archaeologist for the study, discusses how they made the discovery, what was found, and the analyses they've made so far.

This lecture will be held in-person at Anderson House and will last approximately 45 minutes followed by a Q&A session. Registration is requested. Virtual options are available.

[Learn more and register](#)

MUSEUM

Painting of Sullivan's Island Now on View

New on view in the museum is an eighteenth-century oil painting of the Battle of Sullivan's Island, on loan from the Historic Charleston Foundation until 2026. In an attempt to reestablish royal authority in the southern colonies, a powerful British squadron approached Charleston Harbor on June 28, 1776, intent on subduing the city. Instead, 435 South Carolinians manning an unfinished fort made of palmetto logs on Sullivan's Island decimated the attacking ships of the Royal Navy, demonstrating that American



troops could successfully resist and even defeat the most powerful navy in the world. As the battle raged in Charleston, a draft of the Declaration of Independence was first brought before the Continental Congress in Philadelphia. In the weeks after the battle, the South Carolina legislature named the fort in honor of Col. William Moultrie, who commanded the victorious patriot troops on Sullivan's Island.

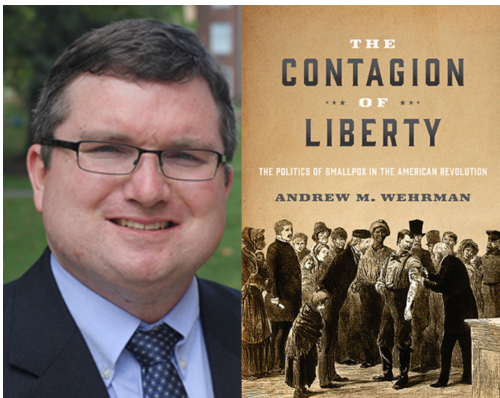
Titled *The Attack on Fort Moultrie*, this contemporary view of the battle was painted by William Elliott (active 1774-1794), a British navy officer and artist. It shows the British ships bombarding the fort on Sullivan's Island, visible at the right with the large garrison flag still flying in the smoke. The painting was probably commissioned after the battle by one of the British naval commanders who participated in the fight. A

plaque on the frame reflects the British perspective on the battle, termed "the Abortive Attack on Fort Moultrie."

[Visit the museum](#)

EVENTS

Smallpox and the American Revolution



Join us on Tuesday, December 13 at 6:30 p.m. EST for our next author's talk featuring Andrew Wehrman, Ph.D., professor of history at Central Michigan University, discussing his new book *Contagion of Liberty: The Politics of Smallpox in the American Revolution*, published by Johns Hopkins University Press. This program accompanies the exhibition [Saving Soldiers: Medical Practice in the Revolutionary War](#), which has been extended through December 13, making this lecture the last opportunity to view the show.

With a smallpox epidemic raging during the Revolutionary War, Gen. George Washington was forced to order the mandatory inoculation of the Continental Army. Washington, however, did not have to convince fearful colonists to protect themselves against smallpox—they were the ones demanding it. Dr. Wehrman explores how inoculation became the most sought-after medical procedure of the eighteenth century and how freedom from disease ultimately helped American colonists achieve independence from Great Britain. This thought-provoking history offers a new dimension to our understanding of both the American Revolution and the origins of public health in the United States.

The talk will last approximately 45 minutes, followed by a book signing. Copies of the book will be available to purchase at the event. Registration is requested. Virtual options are available.

[Learn more and register](#)

EDUCATION

Meet One of Our Master Teachers



Marcee Hinds teaches seventh grade at Mobile's Barton Academy, which opened in 1836 as Alabama's first public school. She attended our Master Teachers Seminar in 2018 and was subsequently named a 2019 James Madison Fellow and the 2020 Gilder Lehrman Alabama History Teacher of the Year. Her research focus with our library and museum collections was the marquis de Lafayette.

What is unique about the Institute's Master Teachers Seminar?

The hands-on aspect. Being able to explore the archives of the Society of the Cincinnati and hold the letters written by the individuals I was researching was incredible and allowed me to feel more connected to them. The Institute's primary source

material is compelling because it gives students first-person perspectives of what Lafayette, along with his troops, suffered during those last critical months of Cornwallis' southern campaign—instead of a passive account of the events leading to Cornwallis' surrender. I have a deep passion for studying the American Revolution, and one of the best parts of participating in the master teachers program has been my continued relationship with the Institute. The ARI has invited me to share that passion with other educators by presenting my lesson and my experience alongside them at conferences.

Why do you believe students should understand and appreciate the achievements of the American Revolution?

It is vitally important for students to understand the struggles and plight of those who fought for our nation's independence so they may have a better appreciation for what these individuals were willing to sacrifice to secure the future of our republic. Without the sacrifices of the great men and women who participated in the revolutionary cause, we would not get to celebrate the precious liberties and freedom that we, as Americans in the twenty-first century, hold so near and dear to our hearts.

[View Marcee's master teacher lesson, "Lafayette's Tumultuous Road to Yorktown"](#)

[Learn more and apply to become a master teacher](#)

EVENTS

Save the Date! Art in Bloom 2023



Art in Bloom DC returns to Anderson House on March 27-30, 2023! This popular event fills our historic headquarters with dozens of floral arrangements inspired by the art and architecture of Anderson House. Art in Bloom DC provides a unique opportunity in the nation's capital to stroll through the museum at your own pace, viewing interpretations of specific artworks, furnishings, and architectural details rendered in a floral medium by some of Washington's most creative and innovative floral designers. For 2023, we've extended the event to four days and will reprise the popular evening reception celebrating the talented florists and exquisite setting that make Art in Bloom DC such a special event. Anderson House is the exclusive venue for Art in Bloom DC, now in its third year. Stay tuned for more details to come early next year.

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The American Revolution secured our independence, created our republic, established our national identity, and expressed ideals of liberty, equality, natural and civil rights, and responsible citizenship that have defined our history and will define our future. The American Revolution Institute of the Society of the Cincinnati promotes knowledge and appreciation of those achievements, fulfilling the aim of the Continental Army officers who founded the Society of the Cincinnati in 1783 to perpetuate the memory of that vast event. The Institute supports advanced study, presents exhibitions and other public programs, advocates effective classroom instruction, and provides resources to teachers and students to enrich understanding of the American Revolution and the principles of the men and women who secured the liberty of the American people.

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