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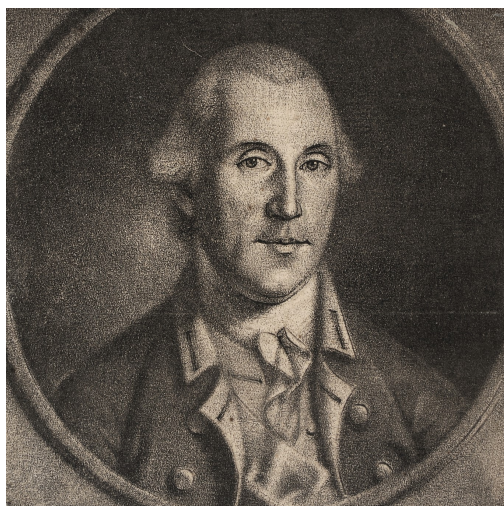
THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION INSTITUTE

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

today
February 1, 2024

[Calendar of Events](#)

This Month in Revolutionary History - George Washington's Birthday



February marks the 292nd birthday of George Washington, a man instrumental to the success of the fight for American independence in war and who in peace served as the nation's first president. Washington was born on February 11, 1731, at the family home of Popes Creek Plantation, Virginia. Owing to a change of calendar that took place across the British Empire on September 3, 1752—from the Julian to the Gregorian—the first day of the year changed from March 25 to January 1 and eleven days were removed from the calendar. These changes caused George Washington's birthday to move from February 11, 1731, to February 22, 1732. As early as the Revolutionary War, February 22 began to be marked as a day to celebrate Washington.

In 1885 to honor Washington, February 22 became a federal holiday. With the passing of the 1968 Uniform Monday Holiday Act by Congress, Washington's birthday would be celebrated on the third Monday in February, a change that came into effect in 1971. Officially, the third Monday in February is "George Washington's Birthday," however in 1971, President Richard Nixon referred to February 22 as "Presidents' Day," a name today that arguably most people would assume to be the holiday's title. This Presidents' Day, or George Washington's Birthday, spare a thought for George and the role he played in making the United States that we know today.

Our Featured Story - Art in Bloom is Back!

If you're looking forward to the spring weather as much as we are, make plans for the return of Art in Bloom DC to Anderson House on March 14-17!

Now in its fourth year, this popular event fills our historic headquarters with dozens of floral arrangements inspired by the art and architecture of Anderson House. Art in Bloom 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



forty of Washington's most creative and innovative floral designers.

Visit during regular viewing hours to explore the floral arrangements, tour the museum, and participate in special demo sessions with featured floral designers. You may also join us for a special reception celebrating the floral sculptures of Art in Bloom DC and the premier florists who created the displays, where guests will have the unique opportunity to explore the installations, meet the floral artists, and discuss the inspirations behind their work while enjoying hors d'oeuvres and refreshments.

Anderson House is the exclusive venue for Art in Bloom DC and is co-produced by the Institute, Margo Fischer of Bright

Occasions, and Ashley Greer of Atelier Ashley Flowers.

[Learn more and purchase tickets](#)

COLLECTIONS

Donation of a Rare North Carolina Portrait



Our noted collection of portrait miniatures of Revolutionary War figures grew recently with the donation of an original watercolor miniature of William Richardson Davie, a cavalry officer and important early leader in North Carolina. In the portrait, Davie wears a general's uniform dating from ca. 1794-1800, when he served both as major general of the North Carolina militia and brigadier general in the U.S. Army (and both units used the same buff-and-blue uniform). The portrait was the generous gift of John Ritchie IV, a great-great-great-grandson of Davie and a member of the Society of the Cincinnati of Maryland.

William Richardson Davie grew up in the Waxhaws near the North Carolina-South Carolina border. He joined the fight against British rule in America in 1777 and went on to command North Carolina state dragoons and serve as an officer in Pulaski's Legion of the Continental Army and as commissary general for the southern army under Gen. Nathanael Greene. A partisan leader on par with Francis Marion, Davie fought in the battles of Stono Ferry, S.C., where he was seriously wounded, and Charlotte, N.C., as well as numerous skirmishes across the South. After the war, he led the campaign for North Carolina to ratify the Constitution, served as major general and commander of the North Carolina militia, was commissioned brigadier general in the U.S. Army during the Quasi-War with France and appointed one of the ministers who negotiated the end of that war, was elected governor of North Carolina, and founded the University of North Carolina. Davie died at his plantation, Tivoli, survived by six children and more than one hundred enslaved people.

EVENTS

The Library at Fifty

The Institute's library is regarded as one of the most important resources in the United States for advanced study on the Revolution and the art of war in the eighteenth century, housing more than fifty thousand rare books, manuscripts, prints, broadsides, maps, and modern reference sources. The library helps to host the Master Teachers Seminar and other historical programs, and has an ever-growing fellowship program, established in 2007, that hosts scholars of the Revolutionary era to use the



collections for their research.

Join us on February 21 at 6:30 p.m. EST to celebrate our library's fiftieth anniversary with a panel discussion on the significance, evolution, and collections of our library and the scholarship that has taken place within its walls. Panelists for this program include historians John Maass of the National Museum of the United States Army, Jake Ruddiman of Wake Forest University, and Iris De Rode, three former scholars from our library's fellowship program.

The panel discussion will be held in-person at Anderson House and last approximately 45 minutes. Following the discussion, the library will be open with a display of some of its treasures. Registration is requested and virtual options are available.

**This program was postponed from November 30, 2023. If you have already registered to attend the panel discussion, either in-person at Anderson House or virtually on Zoom, your earlier registration will be honored on February 21.*

[Learn more and register](#)

EDUCATION

New Online Lesson: **France and the War for American Independence**



A new lesson from one of our 2023 master teachers, Sarah Jaggi, is now online, partially en Français! Sarah teaches French and American history at Ridgeline High School in Millville, Utah. Her lesson is designed to teach freshmen French immersion students about French involvement in the Revolutionary War and how to analyze primary sources, using our library and museum collections. This lesson “is intended as part of a course on French history focused on revolutionary movements that begins with a discussion of Lafayette as a bridge between what students already know (thank you Lin-Manuel Miranda).” One of the items from our library collection Ms. Jaggi incorporates into her lesson is the only map of French origin depicting the action of the Yorktown campaign. It emphasizes, in dramatic schematic form, the key role of the French navy in sealing off the entrance of the Chesapeake Bay, as well as the alignment of ground forces in and around Yorktown and Gloucester.

[View Sarah's lesson](#)

LIBRARY

Meet our Class of 2024 Fellows

It's only fitting that in the fiftieth year of our library we also have our largest class of fellows to date! Fifteen fellows will be joining us in the reading room throughout the year to study a variety of topics including the efforts of the British to incite Scottish Americans to join the loyalist cause, the baking department of the Continental Army, the life of the comte de Rochambeau, the uniforms of the



Continental Army, the experiences of prisoners of war, the responses to marronage (the escape of enslaved people to hidden camps and communities that was a pervasive form of resistance in the era of the Revolution) from imperial agents and early republicans, the affects of war and independence on revolutionaries' environmental perceptions, Horatio Gates, and the Queen's Rangers.

You can keep up with their work throughout the year by following our social media accounts on Facebook, Instagram, and X.

[Meet the class of 2024 fellows](#)

[Learn about our fellowship program](#)

Who We Are, What We Do



Meet Juan Mesa, Events Manager. As a newer addition to our staff, Juan began his association with Anderson House years ago, before most of the staff were in their current jobs. Juan has spent decades in the hospitality industry, working for many of the top catering firms that we team up with for our important rental events program. Through these firms Juan worked as catering captain at events at Anderson House as early as the 1990s. A native of Colombia, Juan worked many years with Occasions and Susan Gage Catering, among others, proving himself a favorite of our long-time event staffers. He helped us on a freelance basis for several months in 2023 before joining the team officially in September of that year. Juan is our main contact point person for wedding events, spending many a Saturday night at Anderson House—when he isn't out enjoying music, soccer, dancing, or spending time with his children. Juan's work to build our rental program exposes more people to our institution and mission and helps to fund our ongoing investment in preserving our museum and headquarters.

[Learn more about hosting your event at Anderson House!](#)



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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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