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News from the American Revolution Institute of the Society of the Cincinnati

ARI today

250 Celebrating the 250th Anniversary of the American Revolution

JULY 2026

[CALENDAR OF EVENTS](#)

FEATURE



Celebrating 250 Years of American Independence

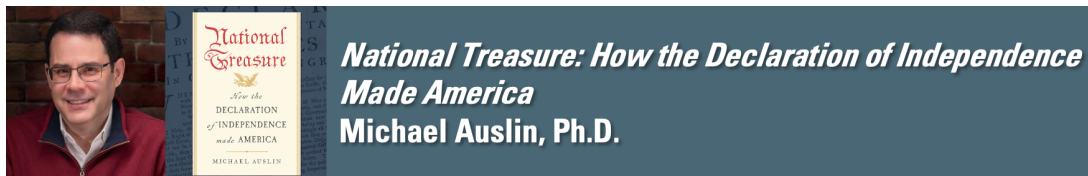
250 years ago, delegates gathered in Philadelphia to vote on the matter of independence. On July 2, 1776, the Second Continental Congress approved a resolution declaring “That these United Colonies are, and of right ought to be, free and independent States, that they are absolved from all allegiance to the British Crown, and that all political connection between them and the State of Great Britain is, and ought to be, totally dissolved.”

Two days later, July 4, 1776, the Declaration of Independence was ratified. That night, John Dunlap—the official printer to Congress—hurriedly printed two hundred copies of the Declaration using the handwritten text delivered by Congress. The news was disseminated to state leaders, Continental troops, and across the Atlantic where the celebrated words declaring universal principles of liberty and equality reached the world through newspapers, broadsides, sermons, business and personal letters, and social gatherings. In 1776 and today, Americans celebrate and grapple with Thomas Jefferson's words:

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.--That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed, --That whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its foundation on such principles and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness.

As we commemorate the 250th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence we remember that this document was not an isolated moment in American history. While news spread of the Declaration, men and women continued to fight for the principles laid out in the document, from the New York campaign of 1776 through the Siege of Yorktown in 1781 to the end of hostilities in 1783.

Use the links below to watch recordings of our recent programs highlighting the significance of the Declaration and the year 1776 in general.



LIBRARY





A New French View of the Chesapeake, 1781

A rare French eyewitness account of the Battle of the Chesapeake is now available online through The Field, the library catalog of the American Revolution Institute of the Society of the Cincinnati.

Recently acquired, this unpublished 185-page naval journal was kept aboard the *Auguste*, an eighty-gun ship of the line in Admiral de Grasse's fleet, during the Yorktown campaign. Written in French by "Le Baigue," who identified himself as a cook aboard the *Auguste*, the manuscript brings readers onto the deck and gun decks of one of the ships that helped decide the fate of the American Revolution.

On September 5, 1781, as the French fleet lay anchored in the Chesapeake, sails appeared on the horizon. French officers first believed they belonged to an expected convoy carrying siege artillery. Instead, they were the British fleet under Admiral Thomas Graves, racing south to rescue Lord Cornwallis at Yorktown.

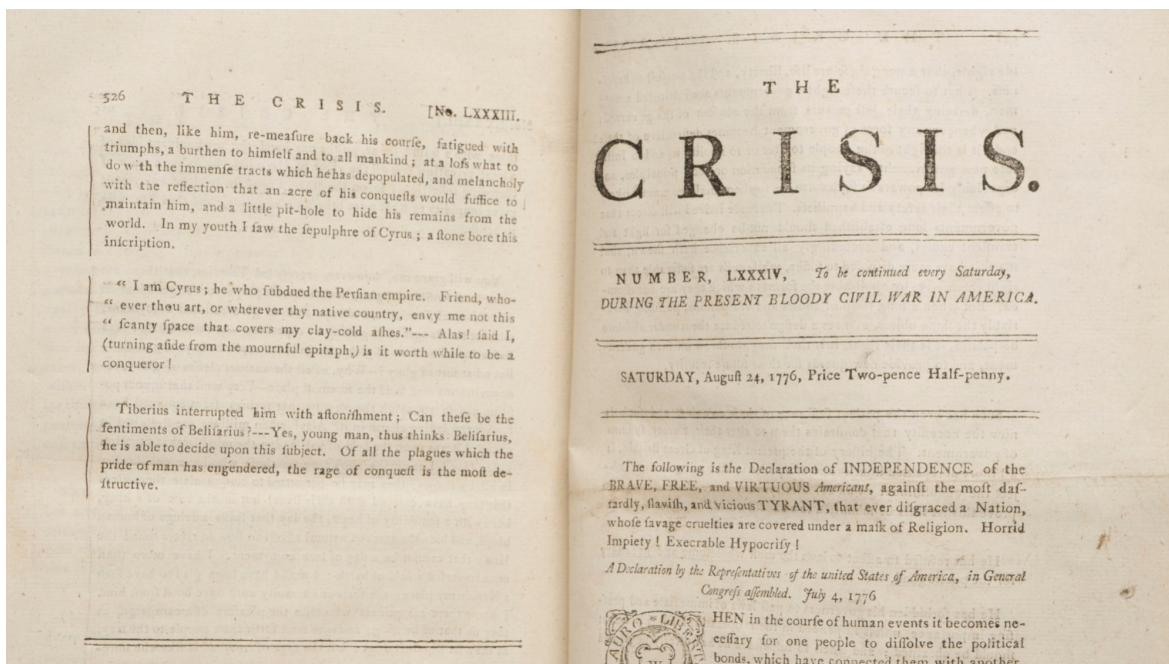
The journal captures the danger and urgency of the day: the *Auguste* running aground before battle, the fleet rushing to form its line, men waiting impatiently at their guns, sails shredded by cannon fire, and ropes cut apart in combat. Under Louis Antoine de Bougainville, the *Auguste* stood in the French van, among the first ships to engage the British.

The newly available digital surrogate allows readers to explore this extraordinary manuscript firsthand and encounter the naval battle that made American victory possible.

[Read More About the Journal](#)

[View the Journal Online](#)

MUSEUM



The Declaration Across the Pond

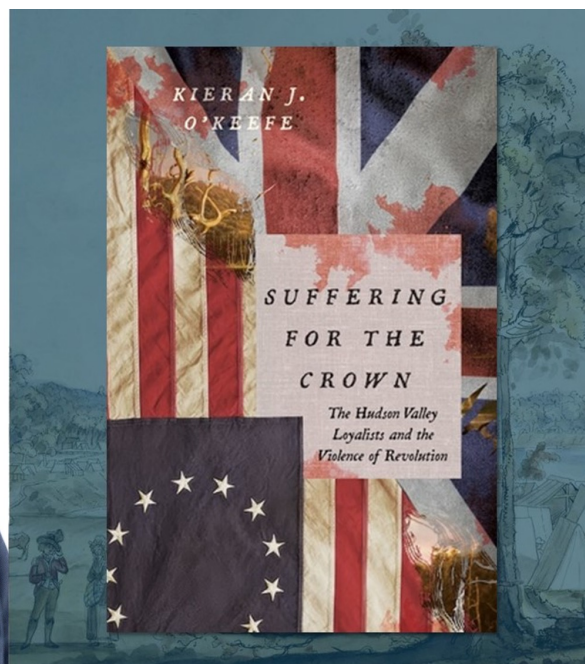
While news of the Declaration of Independence spread across America in July 1776, it also started making its way across the Atlantic. British military leaders in America sent copies of the Dunlap Broadside home, where they sparked a media frenzy. The full text of the Declaration was published for the first time in Britain by mid-August 1776. Other newspapers, magazines, and journals across the British Isles quickly followed—most being dismissive of the American revolutionaries’ claims. Two of these early British printings of the Declaration are now on view in our exhibition *Voices of Revolution*.

In its August 1776 issue, the *Scots Magazine* of Edinburgh published the text of the Declaration with an explanation of the vote in Congress and “remarks” about the document. The often-sarcastic footnotes asked “In what are they created equal?” and, in response to the phrase “life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness,” asserted, “The meaning of these words, the Congress appear not at all to understand.”

The Crisis of London published the text of the Declaration with a different tone in its August 24, 1776, issue. The weekly pamphlet series supported American rights and criticized the king as the source of political turbulence. The publisher introduced the document as “the Declaration of Independence of the Brave, Free, and Virtuous Americans, against the most dastardly, slavish, and vicious Tyrant, that ever disgraced a Nation.”

[Learn More About the Exhibition](#)

EVENTS



***Suffering for the Crown:
The Hudson Valley Loyalists and the Violence of Revolution***

Join us on Tuesday, July 7 at 6:30 p.m. for a lecture featuring Kieran O'Keefe, Ph.D., of Lyon College discussing his new book that focuses our attention on Loyalists living in New York's Hudson Valley during the Revolution, an epicenter where neighbor fought neighbor, brother fought brother, and fathers fought sons.

Through an analysis of the effects of violence on Loyalist communities—which included white, Black, and Native peoples—this talk reveals the brutal reality of war by examining its enduring psychological and social legacies, providing a nuanced understanding of the Revolution's human cost and how suffering became central to how Loyalists came to define themselves and their ordeal.

This program accompanies our current exhibition, [*Voices of Revolution*](#), on view through January 10, 2027.

Learn More and Register

EDUCATION



1776: YEAR IN REVOLUTION

Year in Revolution Commemorates 1776

July 1776 was a pivotal time in the history of the United States. Two hundred and fifty years ago this month, on July 2, the Continental Congress voted to declare itself independent of Great Britain, with the approval of an official written declaration two days later, on July 4—which we celebrate as America’s birthday. On July 9, a crowd in Manhattan pulled down a statue of George III, as British General Willam Howe’s troops began to converge on the outskirts of New York City, setting the stage for what would erupt into the New York campaign. Meanwhile, Silas Deane worked behind the scenes on behalf of Congress in Paris to enlist foreign supplies, financial support, and European military volunteers to aid America’s war effort.

As we continue to celebrate the full release of our *Year in Revolution* classroom video series—with 54 short videos now online commemorating the years 1775 through 1783—we invite you to view and share our 1776 films: “Independence,” “Foreign Volunteers,” “New York City,” “Revolution in the South,” “Washington and Congress,” and timeline “1776” to remember the critical events of that year.

Watch and Share

THIS MONTH’S PROGRAMS

The Institute’s programs are held in-person at Anderson House and virtual options are available, unless otherwise specified. Admission is free unless otherwise specified and registration is requested. Click the images below to learn more and register, or [click here to view our full calendar of upcoming programs.](#)



Lecture

Palmetto Parapets: The Battle of Sullivan's Island
Chip Bragg
Wednesday, July 1, 2026
6:30 P.M.



Author's Talk

Suffering for the Crown: The Hudson Valley Loyalists and Violence of Revolution
Kieran O'Keefe, Ph.D.
Tuesday, July 7, 2026
6:30 P.M.



Concert

Music of the American Revolution—America's 250th!
David and Ginger Hildebrand
Wednesday, July 15, 2026
6:30 P.M.

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The American Revolution Institute of the Society of the Cincinnati, Inc., promotes knowledge and appreciation of the achievement of American independence, 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 preservation, and provides resources to teachers and students to enrich understanding of our War for Independence and the principles of the men and women who secured the liberty of the American people.

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