

# 250<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

## American Revolutionary War

★ ★ OCEAN COUNTY, NEW JERSEY ★ ★

2026 - Volume IV



Visit  
<http://www.ocean250.org/>



**Welcome From  
Commissioner  
Robert S. Arace,  
Chairman of  
Ocean County Parks & Recreation**



The Ocean County Board of Commissioners is proud to help commemorate the 250th anniversary of the American Revolution in what is now Ocean County. For 2026, we will focus on the July 4, 1776 American Declaration of Independence and the adoption of the July 2, 1776 Constitution.

Like most of you, my family was not in what is now Ocean County during the American Revolution. I am a lifelong resident and my family moved to Ocean County in 1998. We are all part of the Ocean County family and we can commemorate and celebrate the proud history of our county.

Ocean County is made up of a community of individuals some of whose ancestors were here before the American Revolution and would have been Patriots, Loyalists or Quakers.

All of our residents, no matter how long they have called Ocean County home, contribute to the history and the future of this wonderful place we call Ocean County.

During the American Revolution, what is now Ocean County was made up of three municipalities: Little Egg Harbor Township (1740) in Burlington County (joined Ocean County in 1891) and Stafford Township (1749) and Dover Township (1767) in Monmouth County. Ocean County was created in 1850. In 2025, we celebrated our 175th anniversary of this milestone.

Please join us for our annual commemoration of the last documented land engagement of the American Revolution of Sunday, December 6, 2025 from 10 AM to 4 PM at Cedar Bridge Tavern Ocean County historic site at 200 Old Halfway Road in Barneget, NJ 08005. We plan to have soldiers recreating the skirmish at noon and two o'clock. There will be demonstrations by a blacksmith, a tavern maker, a sutler selling period clothes, wood working, wool spinning, a period style cannon, period music, crafts and games. Call 732-929-4779 for more details.

Together, we commemorate the past, engage the present and prepare for our future. We are particularly pleased at the participation of so many young people in our efforts.

Sincerely,

Commissioner Robert S. Arace    *November 12, 2026*  
Chairman of Ocean County Cultural & Heritage Commission  
Division of Ocean County Department of Parks & Recreation





## Welcome From Mary Jane Bavais, *Director of Ocean County Parks & Recreation*

Welcome to the ongoing commemoration of the 250th anniversary of the American Revolution in what is now Ocean County (1775-1783). For 2026, we will focus on the July 4, 1776 American Declaration of Independence and the adoption of the July 2, 1776 NJ Constitution. Over the past four years, we have highlighted the Boston Massacre, the Boston Tea Party, the First Continental Congress and the Battles of Lexington and Concord.

Ocean County Parks & Recreation is honored to organize this commemoration under the leadership of Commissioner Robert S. Arace.

Ocean County is proud to have commemorated our county's participation in other historic conflicts such as the 150th anniversary of the American Civil War (2011-2015), the 100th anniversary of the First World War (2017-2018) the seventy-fifth anniversary of the end of the Second World War (2016-2020) and now the 250th anniversary of the American Revolution (2022-2033).

For each of these commemorations, we have displayed patriotic ornamentation and conducted ceremonies at the Court House, including period music and student readings from historic documents. We also planted commemorative trees, made historic resources available to schools and the general public and paused to give thanks for those who have sacrificed for our nation.

For the Semiquincentennial, we have developed a traveling trailer that has participated in many local parades and events. If you would like the trailer to participate in your event, please contact Joseph at [rлатshaw@co.ocean.nj.us](mailto:rлатshaw@co.ocean.nj.us) or **732-929-4779**. Education is the key to understanding the past and gives us the knowledge to create a great future.

I am particularly grateful to the Pomeroy Foundation of Syracuse, New York for funding the marking of graveyards that contain Revolutionary War Patriots in Ocean County.

As a lifelong resident of Ocean County, I am proud to be the ninth director of the Ocean County Parks & Recreation Department.

Kind Regards,

Mary Jane Bavais   *November 12, 2026*  
Director of Ocean County Department of Parks & Recreation





## Welcome From The Crossroads of the American Revolution

Crossroads of the American Revolution has claimed Ocean County as a Heritage Partner for many years. Now, as the nonprofit partner in RevolutionNJ, New Jersey's official organization charged with planning and promoting our state's commemoration, we congratulate Ocean County on becoming a Proud Partner of RevolutionNJ.

In collaboration with your esteemed colleagues, we know you will make the most of this opportunity to explore New Jersey's surprisingly numerous and significant contributions to our nation's rich and complex history. We look forward to commemorating this landmark anniversary together.



Carrie Fellows, Executive Director  
Email Questions: [info@revolutionnj.org](mailto:info@revolutionnj.org)



## Welcome From The New Jersey Historical Commission

The New Jersey Historical Commission is delighted to join with Ocean County in commemorating the upcoming Semiquincentennial of the founding of the United States. In partnership with Crossroads of the American Revolution, the Commission leads RevolutionNJ, our multi-faceted statewide initiative marking this anniversary.

It is our privilege to work with you and all of New Jersey's residents to highlight the rich, diverse, and impactful history of the American Revolution in our state, as well as the 250 years that followed. Preserving, understanding, and enjoying our shared history is fundamental to our future as a vibrant democracy. We are so glad to be working with Ocean County in this exciting endeavor now, and in the years to come!



Sara Cureton, Executive Director

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## Sponsored By: Ocean County Board of Commissioners

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## Ocean County Cultural & Heritage Commission

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### *Front Cover:*

Image created by Virginia Gallagher from a photo by the Ocean County Public Information Department.

### *Back Cover:*

Participants in the November 19, 2025 Countdown Event, including students from Toms River High School South and their teacher Matt Sohl.

**Publisher:** Ocean County Cultural & Heritage Commission

**Contributors:** Tim Hart, Samantha Stokes, Catherine McLaren, R. Joseph Latshaw, Alexandra Smith, Andrea Sauchelli, Thomas Spader





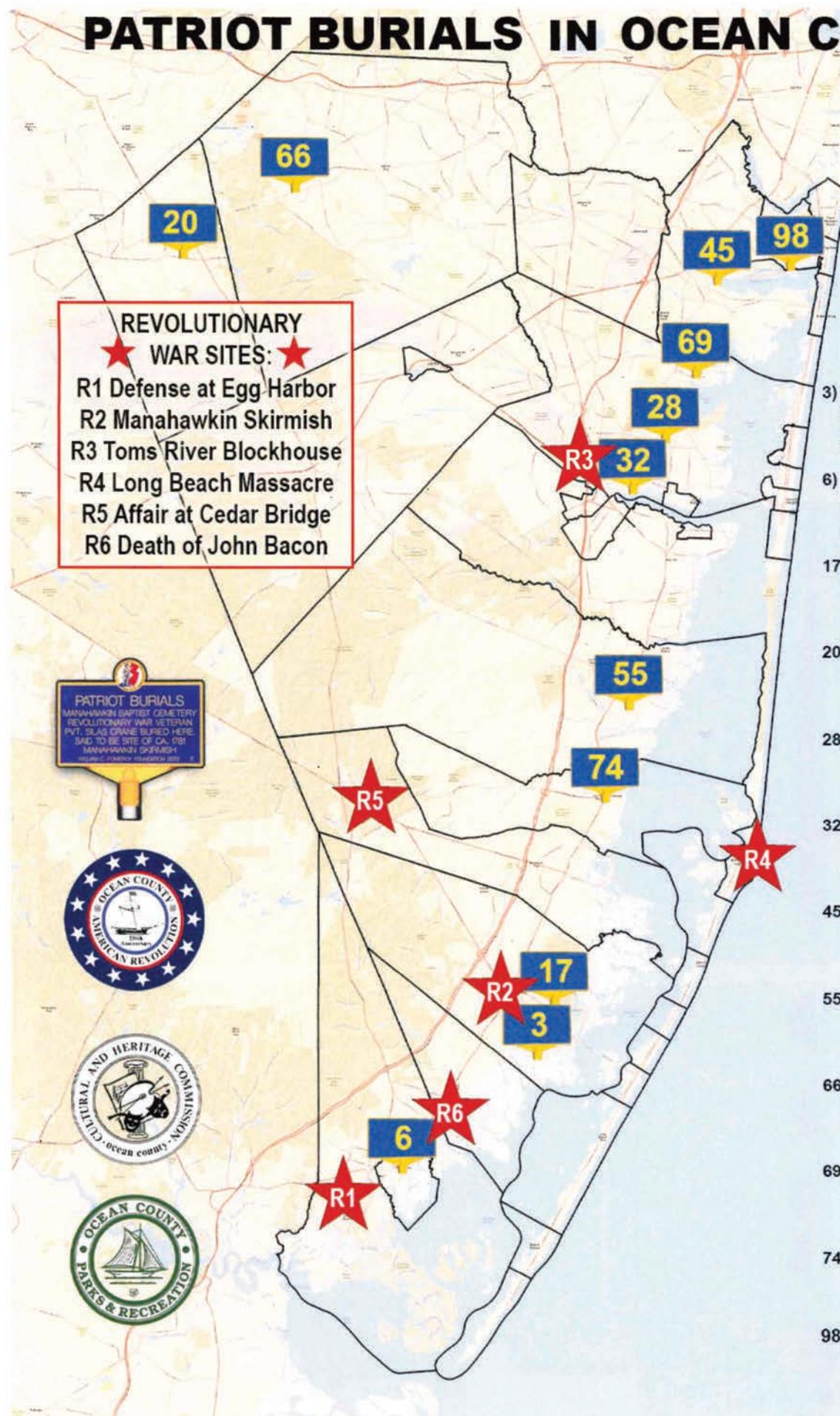
# OCEAN COUNTY AMERICAN REVOLUTION 250<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

## MAJOR EVENTS 2026

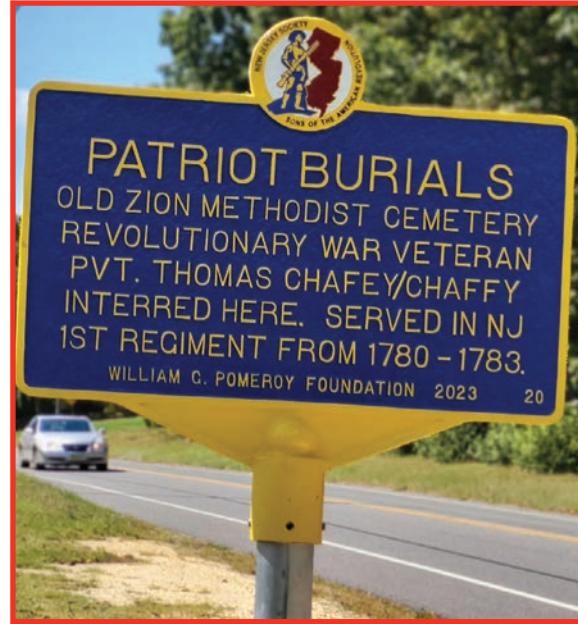
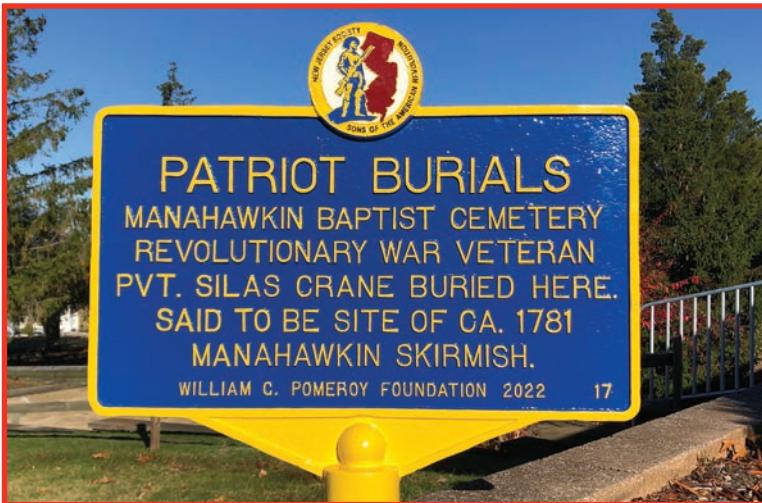
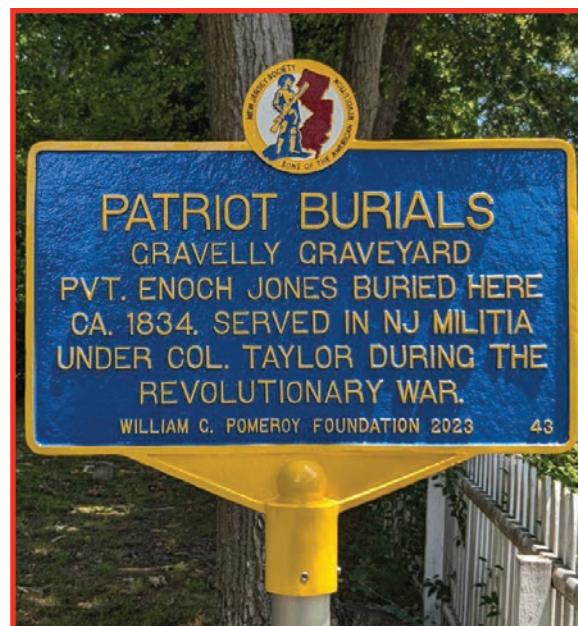
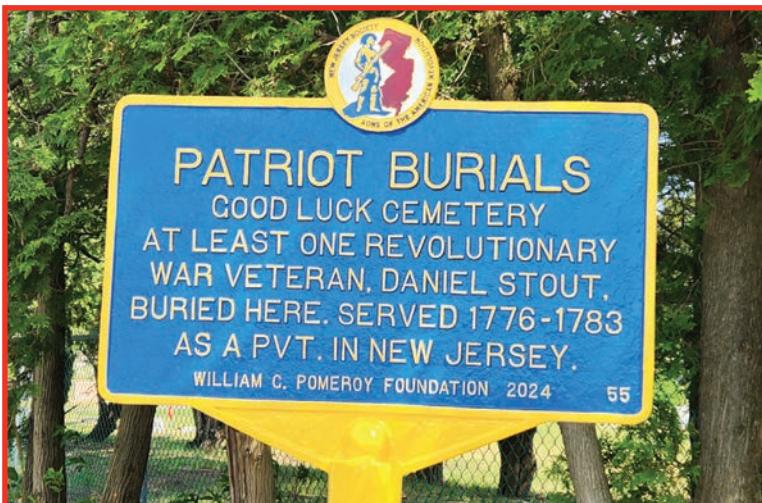
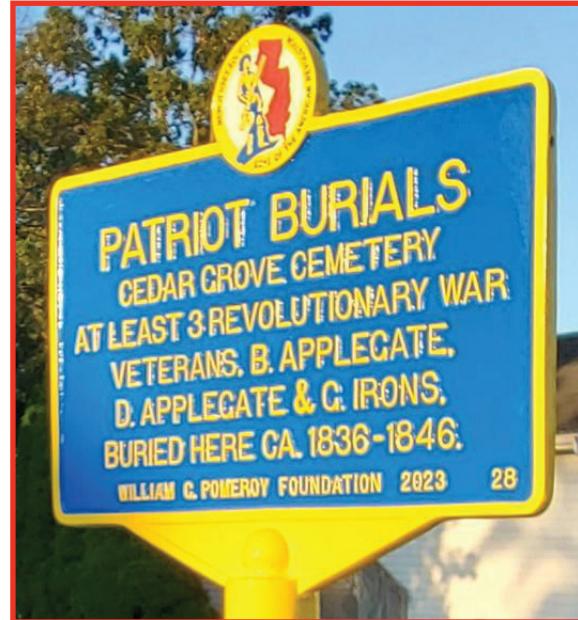
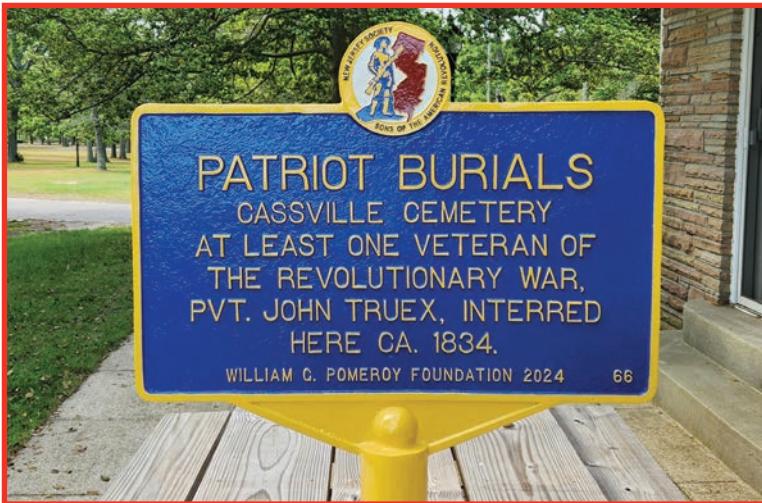
SUNDAY MARCH 29	<b>REVNJ 5K RUN: CEDAR BRIDGE TAVERN</b> 7:30 AM - 11:00 AM @ Cedar Bridge Tavern Historic Site in Barnegat, New Jersey for more information, visit: <a href="https://www.revnj.org/events">https://www.revnj.org/events</a>
SATURDAY APRIL 18	<b>LEAGUE OF HISTORICAL SOCIETIES OF NJ REGIONAL MEETING</b> 9:00 AM - 2:00 PM @ Cedar Bridge Tavern Historic Site in Barnegat, New Jersey for more information, visit: <a href="https://www.lhsnj.org">https://www.lhsnj.org</a>
WEDNESDAY APRIL 22	<b>PLANTING A LIBERTY TREE: ARBOR DAY</b> 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM @ Ocean County Court House in Toms River, New Jersey for more information, visit: <a href="https://www.libertytreesociety.org">https://www.libertytreesociety.org</a>
FRIDAY JULY 3	<b>WAWA WELCOME AMERICA PRESENTS: SALUTE TO INDEPENDENCE PARADE</b> 11:00 AM @ in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
SATURDAY JULY 4	<b>250 CELEBRATION: RINGING FROM SEA TO SHINING SEA</b> 1:00 PM - 3:00 PM @ The Ocean County Court House in Toms River, New Jersey for more information, visit: <a href="https://bells.org/us-semiquincentennial-bell">https://bells.org/us-semiquincentennial-bell</a>
SATURDAY JULY 4	<b>250 CONCERT: OCEAN COUNTY LIBRARY</b> 7:00 PM - 8:30 PM @ The Ocean County Library in Toms River, New Jersey Join US!
SUNDAY OCTOBER 4	<b>BOBBY HORTON: PATRIOT SONGS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION</b> 3:00 PM - 4:30 PM @ Ocean County College in Toms River, New Jersey for more information, visit: <a href="https://www.siegelartist.com/bobby-horton">https://www.siegelartist.com/bobby-horton</a>
THURSDAY NOVEMBER 12	<b>COUNTDOWN TO INDEPENDENCE PRESENTATION</b> 11:00 AM - 12:30 PM @ Ocean County Court House in Toms River, New Jersey Join US!
SUNDAY DECEMBER 6	<b>244<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF THE AFFAIR AT CEDAR BRIDGE TAVERN</b> 9:00 AM - 4:00 PM @ Cedar Bridge Tavern Historic Site in Barnegat, New Jersey Join US!

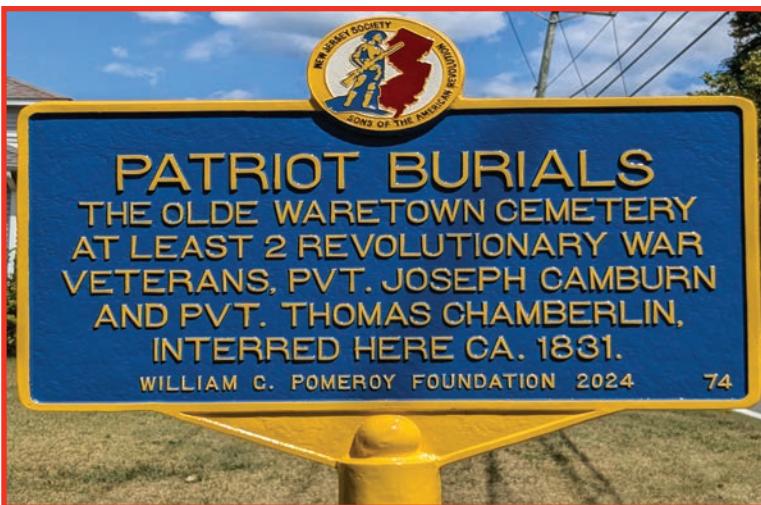
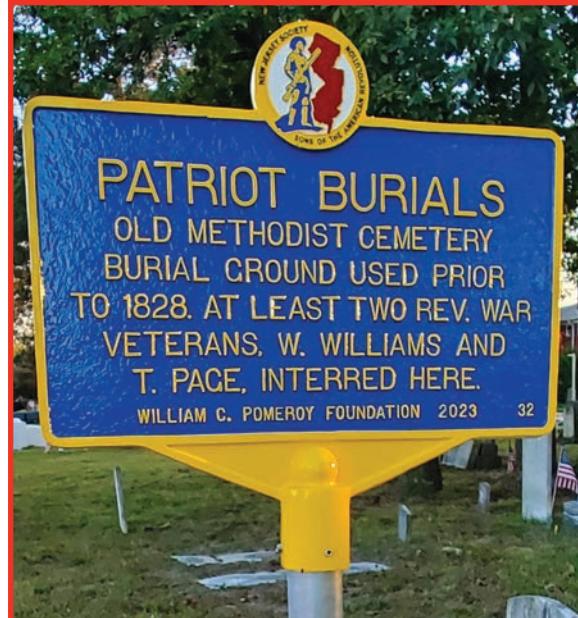
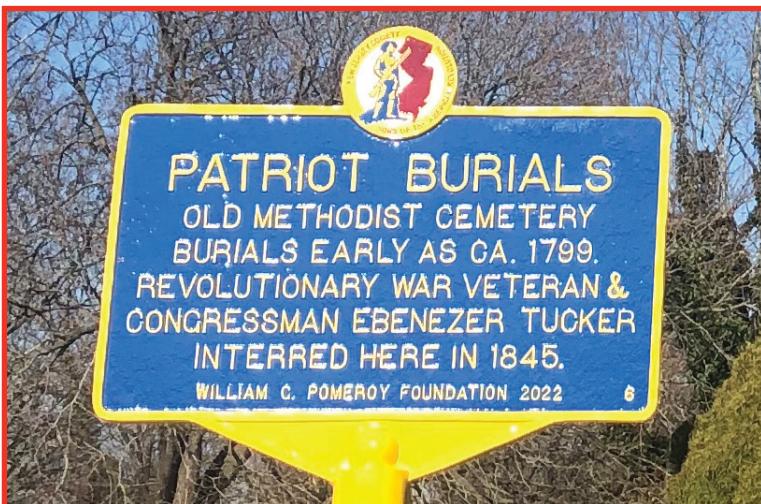
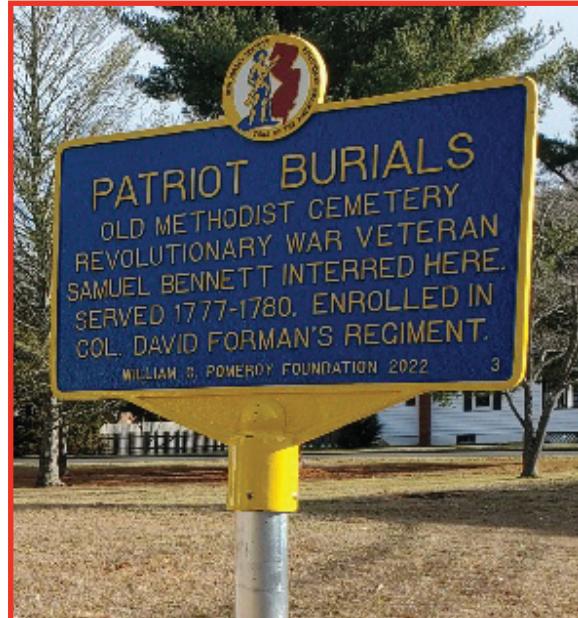
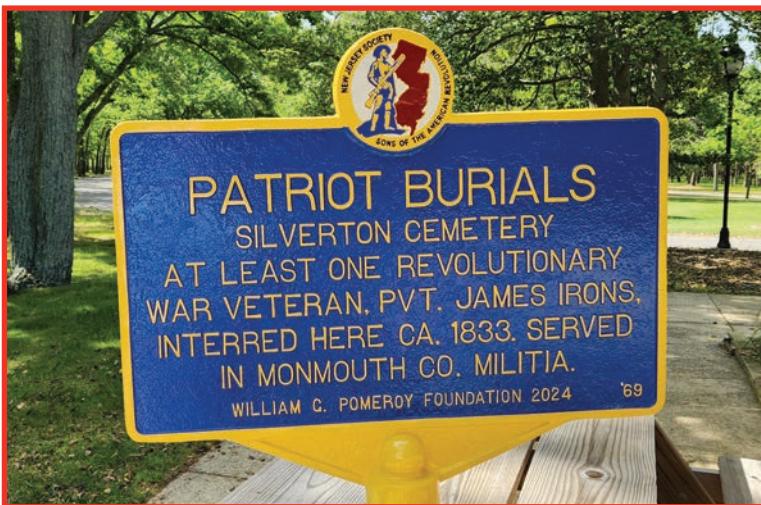
ALL EVENTS SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT NOTICE.

# PATRIOT BURIALS IN OCEAN COUNTY



- 3) Manahawkin Old Methodist  
59 Beach Ave  
Manahawkin, NJ 08050  
39.08153, -74.25756
- 6) Tuckerton Old Methodist  
N Green St and Church St  
Tuckerton, NJ 08087  
39.60554, -74.34006
- 17) Manahawkin Old Baptist  
120 N Main St  
Manahawkin, NJ 08050  
39.69878, -74.25817
- 20) Old Zion Methodist  
Lakewood Rd  
New Egypt, NJ 08533  
40.081697, -74.490679
- 28) Cedar Grove Methodist  
797 Bay Ave,  
Toms River, NJ 08753  
39.973126, -74.168927
- 32) Toms River Old Methodist  
205 Washington Street  
Toms River, NJ 08753  
39.95208, -74.1936
- 45) Gravely Cemetery  
Fairview Ave.  
Brick, NJ 08724  
40.061126, -74.116993
- 55) Good Luck Cemetery  
57 E Haines St  
Lanoka Harbor, NJ 08734  
39.85525, -74.17647
- 66) Cassville Cemetery  
Cassville Rd & Rt 528,  
Jackson, NJ 08527  
40.1054, -74.38826
- 69) Silverton Cemetery  
1919 Hooper Ave  
Toms River NJ 08753  
40.016888, -74.145453
- 74) Waretown Cemetery  
25 Main St.  
Waretown, NJ 08758  
39.787135, -74.196411
- 98) Methodist Episc. West Cemetery  
2009 Veterans Memorial Dr.  
Point Pleasant, NJ 08742  
40.08385, -74.06826





# War At The Shore: Neighbors In Conflict Patriots, Loyalists and Quakers

## PATRIOT



Patriots made up about a third of the population of this region at the time of the American Revolution. Manahawkin, Toms River and Forked River were patriot towns in the region. People who were Baptists and Presbyterians tended to be against England.

**Captain Reuben Randolph ( - 1807)** was a Manahawkin Patriot during the American Revolution. He led about twenty men in Company 5 of the 2nd Monmouth Militia in Stafford Township. Randolph was a prosperous Manahawkin entrepreneur. He owned a sawmill, a general store (now called the Old Stone Store), a tavern at the intersection of Old Shore Road NJ-9 and the Road to Cedar Creek Bridge (Beach Avenue) and a large farm house that is currently the Thomas Shinn Funeral Home.

The Manahawkin Militia marched about 45 miles to the Battle of Monmouth in June of 1778 but were held in reserve and never fought.

Rueben Randolph and the Manahawkin Militia were engaged in many conflicts with John Bacon and his band of Loyalists. Incidents were as petty as John Bacon and his men tying Randolph to a tree in the "Hawkin" swamp to fend for himself. Another time, two of Bacon's men attempted to steal the day's catch of fish from two of Randolph's men only for the tables to turn on them. Bacon and his men also robbed Joseph Soper, the boat builder who was once an employer of Bacon before the war. On one occasion, the Manahawkin Militia walked some eight miles to Tuckerton to confront Bacon's men at the Faulkenberg Tavern, only to have to walk the same distance back to Manahawkin in defeat. The Militia never prevailed in any battle against Bacon's Loyalists.

On December 31, 1781, the forces of Randolph and Bacon clashed between the Old Baptist Church and the Mill Creek. Bacon and his men prevailed on their path to the south, leaving Patriots Lines Pangburn dead and Sylvester Tilton seriously wounded. After the war, Tilton attempted to have revenge on Brewer, the neighbor who had wounded him.

Soper and other members of the Manahawkin Militia were victims of the Barnegat Light Massacre of October 27, 1782. Bacon and his men reportedly surprised and killed over twenty patriots unloading a prize ship near Barnegat Inlet.

# War At The Shore: Neighbors In Conflict Patriots, Loyalists and Quakers

## LOYALIST

Loyalists made up about a third of the population of this region at the time of the American Revolution. The town of Cedar Bridge was an example of a Loyalist community. Some were actually loyal to their King while others may have been criminals looking for a cover story. After the war, many people in the southern part of Monmouth County made a strong effort to claim how much they supported the cause of a new nation and a break from their former King George.



**Captain John Bacon ( – April 3, 1783)** was a notorious leader of the irregular Loyalists, often called Pine Robbers, refugees, banditti and many other unflattering terms. We do not know much about Bacon's origins, but he reportedly worked as a laborer between Waretown and Manahawkin before the war. He is an example of the "bottom rung on top," a person who uses times of upheaval to elevate their status. Some debate if his title of "captain" was a royal commission or merely self-appointed. Bacon reported to New Jersey British Governor William Franklin and his Board of Associated Loyalists.

Dr. David Fowler describes Bacon as the "foremost Tory guerrilla of the seacoast and pinelands region...he far surpasses any other of them in the length of his career, the area over which he ranged...and the number of bloody incidents in which he was involved." He plied the contraband trade between Loyalist held New York City and Tuckerton and supplied charcoal and food. He was also able to return escaped British prisoners. He had several whaleboats with names such as the "Black-Joke" and "Hero's Revenge." Apparently, he lived in "caves" on nearby Jones Road. The local "Bacon's Ridge" is the name of the dramatic change in elevation on NJ Route 72.

Patriot Governor Livingston issued a reward of £50 Sterling for the capture of John Bacon dead or alive for robbing a Burlington County tax collector. Bacon and a reported 50 men were involved in the skirmish with the Burlington Militia at Cedar Creek Bridge on December 27, 1782. On January 13, 1783, the Loyalist newspaper, the New York Gazette, commended Bacon for his "victory." On April 3, 1783, Bacon was killed resisting arrest by the Burlington militia. This included Joel Cooke, whose brother died at Cedar Bridge.

Bacon appeared to have been a Quaker who was "written out" because of his participation in the war. Bacon's in-laws were Quakers who lived in Barnegat. His wife and two sons lived near Pemberton. He defeated elements of the Burlington, Gloucester and Monmouth militias.

# War At The Shore: Neighbors In Conflict Patriots, Loyalists and Quakers

## QUAKER



Quakers made up about a third of the population of this region at the time of the American Revolution. Both the towns of Barnegat and Tuckerton had large Quaker populations and meetinghouses (1767/1709). As a matter of faith and practice, the Quakers did not engage in violence. Those members who did participate with one side or the other (most chose to be Loyalists like John Bacon) would be “read out” of the meetinghouse. The Quakers were often successful business people and profited by being the intermediaries between the warring Patriots and Loyalists. After the war, New Jersey passed laws that penalized the Quakers for profiting from the conflict. Quakers generally leaned against the Patriots in part because Catholic France supported the revolution.

The Society of Friends emerged in England around 1650 with leaders such as George Fox. William Penn established Pennsylvania as a Quaker colony. William Fox and other Quakers purchased West Jersey and later large portions of East Jersey.

**Captain George Mapps or Mapes (c. 1763 - March 6, 1838)** was an African-American Quaker and a ship’s captain during the American Revolution. He moved from the area of the Mullica River to Tuckerton. He was said to have transported munitions during the Revolutionary War but refused to transport arms in the War of 1812 on religious grounds of non-violence. Among the first persons of color to participate in an American integrated religious community, Captain Mapps belonged to the Society of Friends Meetinghouse at Little Egg Harbor. Mapps later lived near and witnessed the closing of Cranberry Inlet at Toms River in 1812.



Holly Tree  
*Ilex opaca*

# OCEAN COUNTY LIBERTY TREE PROJECT

The Ocean County Board of Commissioners are planting a number of Liberty Trees in Ocean County to commemorate the 250th Anniversary of the American Revolution. Efforts are being made to plant the trees as soon as possible and dedicate them in the year of the event that they commemorate. A list and location of sites is available at: <https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/6bcea67f6fb64fe9499ecfb64c1193b>.

Three types of trees will be used. The **American Holly** will be used at Barnegat Light and Cranberry inlet supplied by the Ocean County Soil Conservation Commission. The family of SSG Michael W. Spiecker, US Army Reserve, donated 3 **Tulip Poplars** propagated from the Annapolis Liberty Tree <https://tinyurl.com/2mkpjr5k> and 10 **Elm** trees from the Elm tree institute in New Hampshire: <https://tinyurl.com/yykm3syz>

The original Liberty Tree (1646-1775) was a famous Elm tree that stood in Boston near the Boston Commons. In 1765, the colonists in Boston stage the first act of defiance against the British government at the tree. The tree became a rallying point for protests. In 1775, the British had enough of these rebellious rallies at the Liberty Tree and had it cut down.

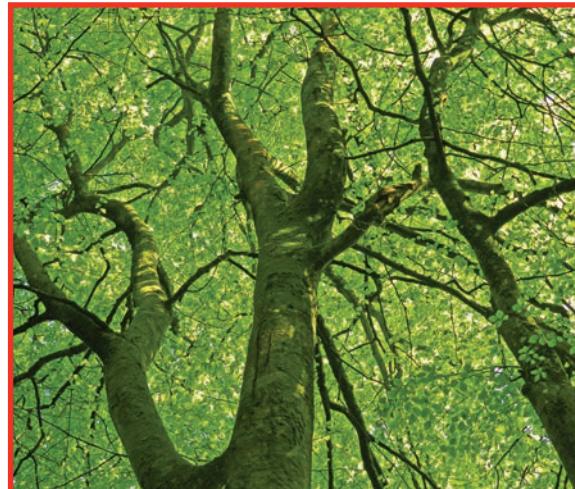
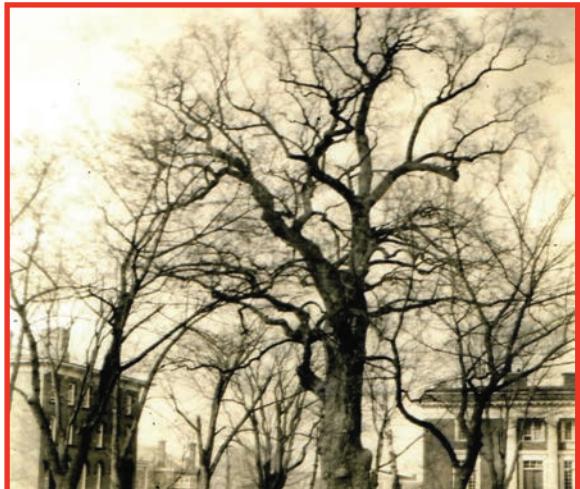
The Society of the Sons of American Revolution is sponsoring a national program to plant Liberty Trees. <https://america250sar.org/libertytree/>

Many other towns designated their own Liberty Trees. The Liberty Tree at the Museum of the American Revolution contains a piece of the 400 year old Tulip Poplar tree that stood on the grounds of the St. John's College in Annapolis, Maryland and blew down in a storm in 1999.

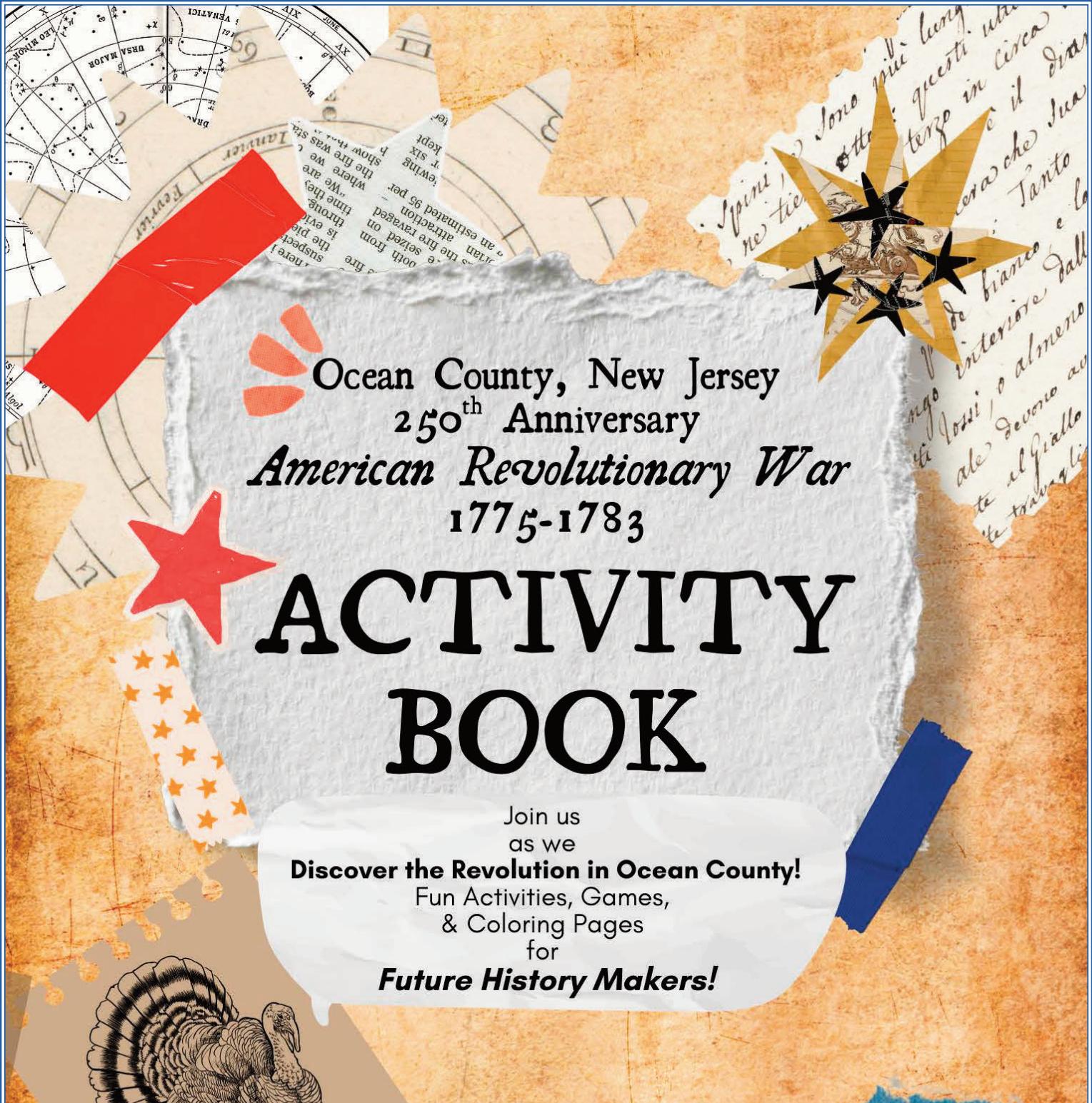
In some towns, patriots would erect a liberty pole that would usually have a Phrygian Red Cap on the top – a symbol of the Roman freed slave.

Besides actual trees, the term “Tree of Liberty” is associated with a quotation from a 1787 letter from Thomas Jefferson, “the tree of liberty must be refreshed from time to time with the blood of patriots and tyrants.”

Tulip Poplar  
*Liriodendron tulipifera*



Elm  
*Ulmus*



Ocean County, New Jersey  
250<sup>th</sup> Anniversary  
*American Revolutionary War*  
1775-1783

# ACTIVITY BOOK

Join us  
as we  
**Discover the Revolution in Ocean County!**  
Fun Activities, Games,  
& Coloring Pages  
for  
**Future History Makers!**



Brought to you by the  
Ocean County Board of Commissioners Robert S. Arace,  
Chairman of Parks and Recreation  
Jennifer Bacchione  
Sam Ellenbogen  
Ray Gormley  
Frank Sadeghi



Mary Jane Bavais, Director of Parks and Recreation  
[www.oceancountyparks.org](http://www.oceancountyparks.org)

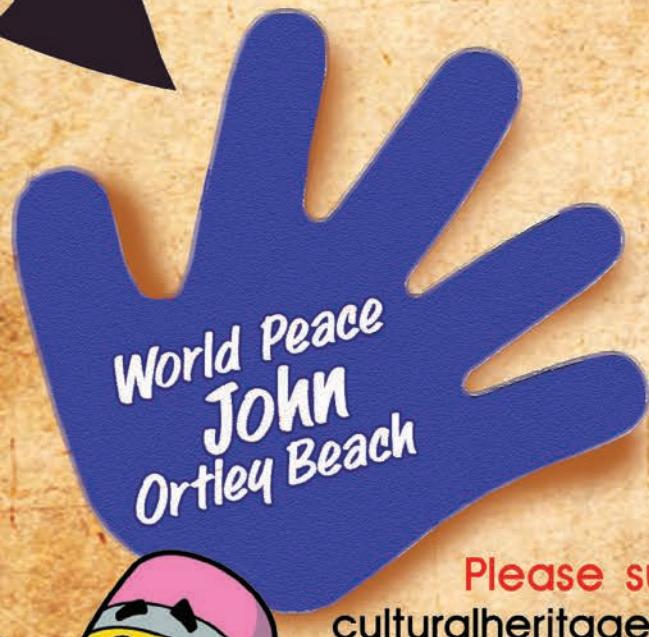


# We the People

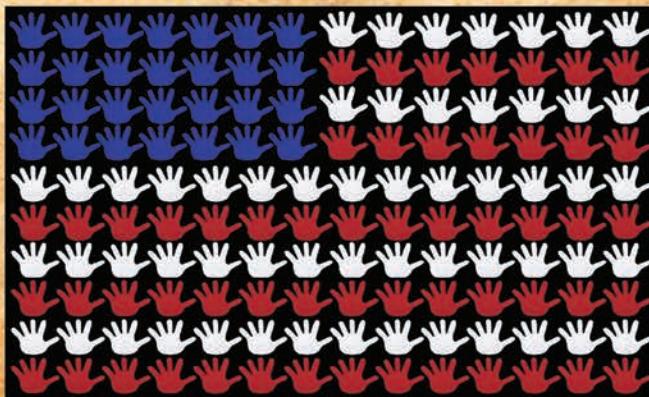
## HELP OCEAN COUNTY CREATE OUR 250th HOPE FLAG



PLEASE FILL  
IN INFORMATION



Please submit to,  
[culturalheritage@co.ocean.nj.us](mailto:culturalheritage@co.ocean.nj.us)



# Quiz: Are You a Patriot, Loyalist, or Quaker?

Read each question and circle the answer that matches your opinion best.

## 1. A new tax has been placed on tea. How do you feel?

- A. That's unfair! People should have a say when they're taxed.
- B. As citizens, we have an obligation to British Empire.
- C. Taxes happen. I'd rather stay out of arguments.

## 2. The town is holding a meeting to talk about protests. What do you do?

- A. I'm going! I want to hear how we can take action.
- B. I'll attend, but only to support keeping peace with Britain.
- C. I don't attend. Meetings get too heated.

## 3. Soldiers are marching through your town.

- A. I'm nervous — they shouldn't be here without permission.
- B. They protect us and keep order.
- C. I hope everyone stays peaceful.

## 4. Your friend asks you to help write a letter arguing for independence.

- A. Absolutely — I have ideas!
- B. No thanks. Independence is too risky.
- C. I don't want to take a stand either way.

## 5. A group of neighbors dumps tea in the harbor. Your reaction?

- A. Bold move!
- B. That's destruction of property — not okay.
- C. Violence and destruction make me uncomfortable.

## 6. Your family must choose a side. What do you say?

- A. I choose independence.
- B. I choose loyalty to the King.
- C. I don't want to choose — I prefer staying uncommitted.

## 7. Someone asks you to pick up a musket and join a militia.

- A. If it's to defend our rights, yes.
- B. I'll fight to protect the King.
- C. I won't fight — I believe in peace.

## 8. What do you think is most important?

- A. Freedom and representation.
- B. Safety, stability, and tradition.
- C. Peace, kindness, and fairness to all.

## 9. A newspaper prints a loud, opinionated article.

- A. Someone has to say it!
- B. They need to calm down — too much conflict.
- C. I wish people would stop arguing so much.

## 10. If you lived in 1776, what would your goal be?

- A. Help the colonies become independent.
- B. Keep the colonies united with Britain.
- C. Avoid fighting and help people live peacefully.

**Mostly A's:** Patriot  
**Mostly B's:** Loyalist  
**Mostly C's:** Quaker or Uncommitted



### **Patriot:**

The King has taken our rights away as English citizens. Patriots wanted more say in their government and were ready to make big changes to get it.

### **Loyalist:**

Loyalists believed staying with Britain and the King was better for the colonies.

**Quaker/Uncommitted:**  
You will not become violent. Quakers often avoided taking sides because they believed in nonviolence and treating everyone with respect.



# Constitution of New Jersey

Whereas all the constitutional Authority, ever possessed by the Kings of Great Britain over these Colonies, or their other Dominions, was, by Compact, derived from the People, and held of them for the common Interest of the whole Society, Allegiance and Protection are, in the Nature of Things, reciprocal Ties, each equally depending upon the other, and liable to be dissolved by the other's being refused or withdrawn. And whereas George the third, King of Great Britain, has refused Protection to the good People of these Colonies; and, by assenting to sundry Acts of the British Parliament, attempted to subject them to the absolute Dominion of that Body; and has also made War upon them in the most cruel and unnatural Manner, for no other Cause than asserting their just Rights, all civil Authority under him is necessarily at an End, and a Dissolution of Government in each Colony has consequently taken Place.

And whereas in the present deplorable Situation of these Colonies, exposed to the Fury of a cruel and relentless Enemy, some Form of Government is absolutely necessary, not only for the Preservation of good Order, but also the more effectually to unite the People, and enable them to exert their whole Force in their own necessary Defense; and as the Honorable the Continental Congress, the Supreme Council of the American Colonies, has advised such of the Colonies, as have not yet gone into the measure, to adopt for themselves respectively such Government, as shall best conduce to their own Happiness & Safety, and the Well-Being of America in general; We the Representatives of the Colony of New Jersey, having been elected by all the Counties, in the freest Manner, and in Congress assembled, have, after mature Deliberations, agreed upon a Set of Charter Rights, and the Form of a Constitution, in Manner following.

That all Inhabitants of this Colony of full Age, who are worth Fifty Pounds proclamation Money clear Estate in the same, & have resided within the County in which they claim a Vote for twelve Months immediately preceding the Election, shall be entitled to vote for Representatives in Council & Assembly; and also for all other publick Officers that shall be elected by the People of the County at Large.

That the Council & Assembly shall have Power to make the Great Seal of this Colony, which shall be kept by the Governor, or, in his Absence, by the Vice-President of the Council, to be used by them as Occasion may require; and it shall be called the Great Seal of the Colony of New Jersey.

That all Criminals shall be admitted to the same Privileges of Witnesses & Counsel, as their Prosecutors are or shall be entitled to.

*Continued from page 30*

That no Person shall ever within this Colony be deprived of the inestimable Privilege of worshipping Almighty God in a Manner agreeable to the Dictates of his own Conscience; nor under any Pretence whatsoever compelled to attend any Place of Worship, contrary to his own Faith and Judgment; nor shall any Person within this Colony ever be obliged to pay Tithes, Taxes, or any other Rates, for the Purpose of building or repairing any Church or Churches, Place or Places of Worship, or for the Maintenance of any Minister or Ministry, contrary to what he believes to be right, or has deliberately or voluntarily engaged himself to perform.

.....

That there shall be no Establishment of any one religious Sect in this Province in Preference to another; and that no Protestant Inhabitant of this Colony shall be denied the Enjoyment of any civil Right merely on Account of his religious Principles; but that all Persons, professing a Belief in the Faith of any Protestant Sect, who shall demean themselves peaceably under the Government as hereby established, shall be capable of being elected into any Office of Profit or Trust, or being a Member of either Branch of the Legislature, & shall fully & freely enjoy every Privilege & Immunity enjoyed by others their Fellow-Subjects.

.....

That every Person, who shall be elected as aforesaid to be a Member of the Legislative Council or House of Assembly, shall, previous to his taking his Seat in Council or Assembly, take the following Oath or Affirmation, vizt I A.B. do solemnly declare, that, as a Member of the Legislative Council, (or Assembly as the Case may be) of the Colony of New Jersey, I will not assent to any Law, Vote, or Proceeding, which shall appear to me injurious to the publick Welfare of said Colony, nor that shall annul or repeal that Part of the third Section in the Charter of this Colony, which establishes that the Election of Members of the Legislative Council & Assembly shall be annual, nor that Part of the twenty second Section in said Charter respecting the Trial by Jury, nor that shall annul, repeal, or alter any Part or Parts of the eighteenth or nineteenth Sections of the same. And any Person or Persons, who shall be elected as aforesaid, is hereby empowered to administer to the said Members the said Oath or Affirmation.

.....

Provided always, and it is true Intent & Meaning of this Congress, that if a Reconciliation between Great Britain & these Colonies should take Place, and the latter be again taken under the Protection & Government of the Crown of Great Britain, this Charter shall be null and void, otherwise to remain firm and inviolable.

.....

In Provincial Congress, New Jersey, Burlington, July 2nd, 1776

By order of Congress SAMUEL TUCKER, President

*Extract from the Minutes, William Paterson, Secry.*

Constitution	1776	1844	1947
Adopted	July 2, 1776	June 29, 1844	Nov 4, 1947
Governor			Strongest in USA
Elected by	Legislature	Public	public
Term	1 year	3 year	4 year
Limit	None	Can not repeat	Two terms
Senate	1 year	1 year	4-4-2
name	Legislative Council	Senate	Senate
minimum	1 per county	1 per county	**
Assembly	1 year	1 year	2 year
By county		At least 1	**
Minium	39	1 per county	
Maximum		60	80
Amendments	None*	Only 1875 13 <sup>th</sup> & 15 <sup>th</sup> Amend	incorporate
Suffrage	Anyone 50£	Male – white	universal
Age	21	21	21***
Residency	12 months		
Religious Freedom	Protestant Sect	All	All

\*1807 restrictions is a law not an amendment

\*\*Today governed by one man –  
one vote Baker v. Carr 369 US 186 (1962)

\*\*\*Expanded to 18 years old



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BEACH HAVEN, NEW JERSEY

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Surflight Theatre announces*

**1776 The Musical**

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**RevolutionNJ**  
 1776 • 2026 | ENGAGE THE PAST. SHAPE THE FUTURE.  
**REVOLUTIONARY SCHOOLS**

## Become a Revolutionary School!

Engage in a class- or school-wide civics initiative to promote the ideals of the American Revolution and foster active civic participation.

- Incorporate RevolutionNJ educational program(s) into your curriculum (History Happened Here or Foundations of Democracy).
- Share exemplary social studies instructional practices.
- Make social studies instruction accessible to all students and elevate the importance of civics and history instruction in all grades.
- Share information about local and statewide semiquincentennial-related events and commemorations.

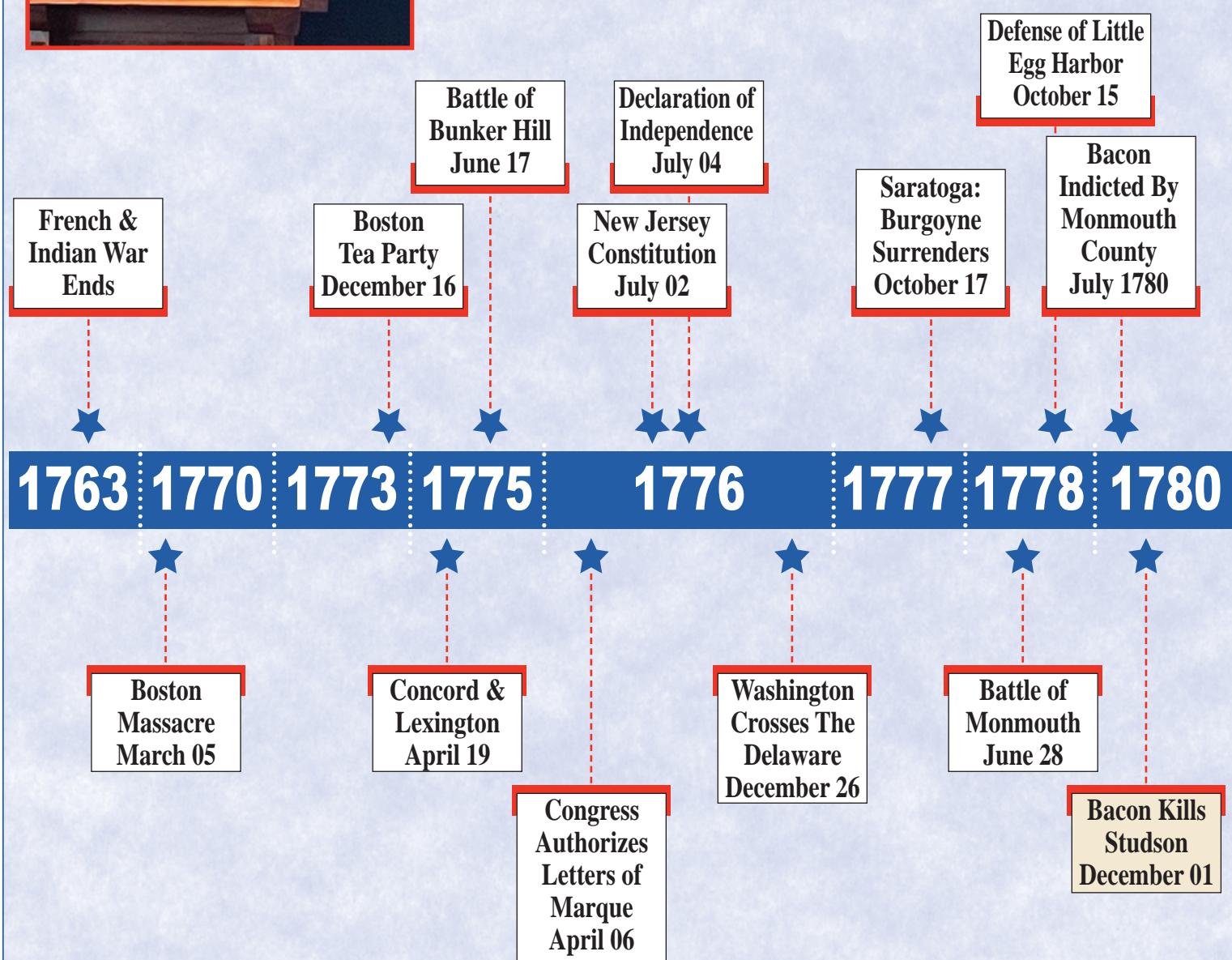
[Revolutionary Schools Sign-Up Form](#)



# TIMELINE OF

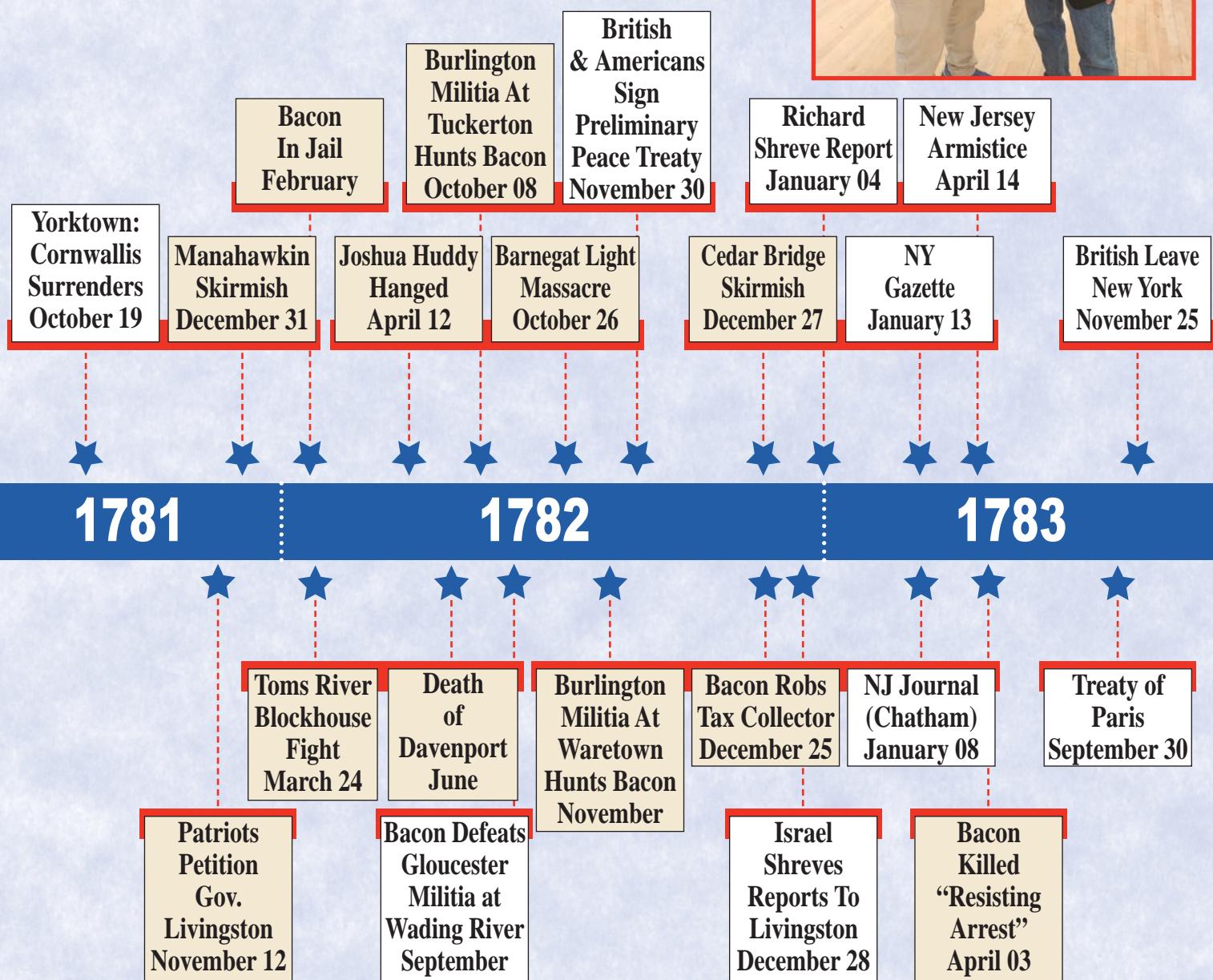
**Ned Blackhawk, Ph.D.**

Howard R. Lamar Professor of History and  
American Studies, Yale University  
Author, *Rediscovery of America 2023.*



# OCEAN COUNTY

*Jim Burns*



# OCEAN COUNTY 250<sup>TH</sup> TRAVELING EXHIBIT

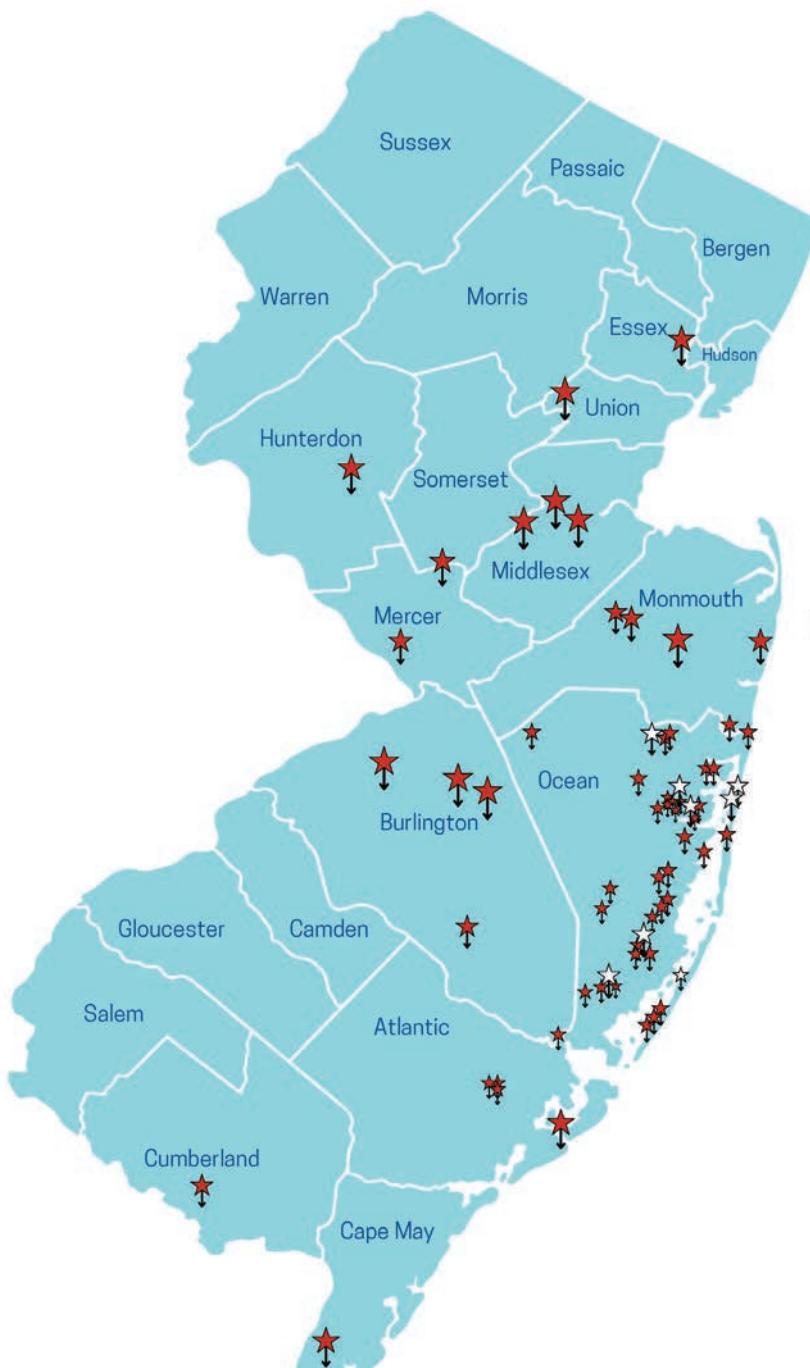


**HAVE TRAILER -  
WILL TRAVEL!**

# OCEAN COUNTY 250<sup>TH</sup> TRAVELING EXHIBIT



# Ocean County Outreach Trailer/Table



**Goal: By 2033**

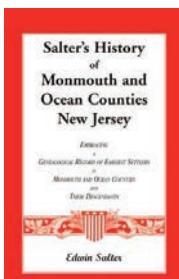
**All 21 Counties  
2,106,000 Engagements**

Parades:

Events:

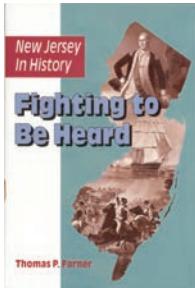
	2022	2023	2024	2025	total
Events	35	47	47	49	178
Parades	5	6	7	7	25
total w/parades	95,543	212,618	192,121	237,005	737,287
Direct Engagement	7,278	20,900	27,638	25,103	80,919
Adult engagement	4,560	13,466	21,523	17,232	56,781
Youth Engagement	2,718	7,434	6,115	7,871	24,138

# RECOMMENDED READING

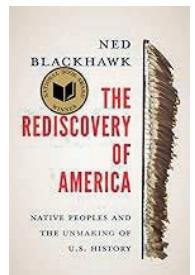


Salter, Edwin. *A History of Monmouth and Ocean Counties*. Bayonne, NJ : E. Gardner & Sons, Publishers, 1890.

One of the standard historical and genealogical works on Monmouth and Ocean Counties. Contains such miscellany as a list of officers and soldiers from old Monmouth who served in the Revolutionary War. 80-page Genealogical Record section (alphabetical order by family name) of the first settlers of Monmouth and Ocean Counties. Edwin Salter was a well-regarded man of his time, a member of the New Jersey state legislature and a Speaker of the House. He was appointed to a position in the U.S. Treasury Department where he served for five years. His years in D.C. were spent researching this book at the National Archives.

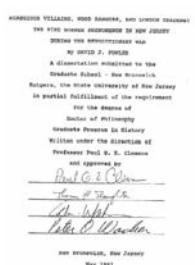


Farner, Thomas P. *New Jersey in History: Fighting To Be Heard*. Harvey Cedars, NJ: Down the Shore Publishing, 1996. Here is New Jersey's surprising and often tumultuous history. Book includes key articles on Cedar Bridge, Barnegat Light Massacre and John Bacon from a contemporary journalist perspective. Book has been credited as starting the process that saved and restored the Cedar Bridge Tavern."



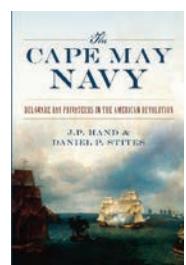
Blackhawk, Ned. *The Rediscovery of America: Native Peoples and the Unmaking of U.S. History*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2023.

In *The Rediscovery of America*, Western Shoshone historian Ned Blackhawk pursues a narrative to place Indigenous People at the center of United States history. Blackhawk asks how the history of "the world's most exemplary democracy" can be rooted in the dispossession of Indigenous People? And, how have historians ignored the centrality of Indigenous People in U.S. history? In order to tell a new history of the United States, Blackhawk rejects narratives of discovery and emphasizes a long history of Native-newcomer encounters in North America as well as Indigenous agency and mobility.



Fowler, David J. "Egregious Villains, Wood Rangers, and London Traders: The Pine Robber Phenomenon In New Jersey During The Revolutionary War." Doctoral thesis, Rutgers University – New Brunswick, 1987.

This dissertation describes and analyzes the proliferation of civil violence and guerrilla warfare during the Revolutionary war in the New Jersey Pine Barrens and contiguous coastal areas. In the colonial period the sub region was a politically, economically, and culturally marginal wilderness that nonetheless was not characterized by criminality or violence. Upon the outbreak of war, however, the forest was employed for one of the ancient uses of such "waste" places when it became a refuge and a base of operations for Loyalist irregulars and others of more questionable motivation. One of these individuals was John Bacon who was active in present day Ocean County and is examined in Chapter 8 "The Infernal Gang"; John Bacon.



Hand, J.P., Stites, Daniel P. *The Cape May Navy: Delaware Bays Privateers in the American Revolution*. Charleston, SC: The History Press, 2018.

The Delaware Bay during the Revolutionary War was vital for trade and home to a host of armed conflicts between British vessels and American privateers. Cape May County captains in their light, fast vessels captured dozens of British merchant ships off the Atlantic coast. At the Battle of Delaware Bay, Lieutenant Joshua Barney aboard the Hyder Ally overcame massive odds and defeated the British warship General Monk. Colonel Elijah Hand, local hero of the skirmish at Quinton's Bridge, took his military talents to the seas, where he dueled with Tory privateers. Still in his twenties, Yelverton Taylor captured the Triton with hundreds of Hessian soldiers on board. Authors James P. Hand and Daniel P. Stites chart the exciting history of the Cape May Navy in the War for Independence.

# DEFENSE OF EGG HARBOR -

## October 15, 1778

**R1**



Louis S.  
Glanzman  
(1922 - 2013)

*Lieutenant  
St. Elmo*

Oil on Canvas  
2010

The largest military engagement of the American Revolution in Ocean County. More patriots died from battle wounds at Egg Harbor than at Trenton. Count Casimir Pulaski's Legion prevented British Capt. Patrick Ferguson's force of 250 from carrying out a plan to attack Batsto Iron Works and stop supply shipments to General George Washington's army. The British butchered patriots before retreating and finally abandoning their efforts to remove the nest of rebel pirates.

# MANAHAWKIN SKIRMISH -

## December 31, 1781

**R2**



Louis S.  
Glanzman  
(1922 - 2013)

*Manahawkin  
Skirmish*

Oil on Canvas  
2010  
21 1/2 x 27 1/2

Less than three months after the British surrender at Yorktown, a band of pine robbers led by notorious Capt. John Bacon passed through Manahawkin in the dark hours of the night. Capt. Reuben Randolph's Company 5, 2nd Monmouth Militia fired upon them. The sentries posted at the Baptist Church are said to have dozed off. The militia was half the size of Bacon's gang, forcing a retreat. Capt. Randolph signed a petition (Nov. 12, 1781) to New Jersey Governor Livingston for protection "from the ravages" committed by these loyalist "creatures." Patriot Lines Pangburn was killed and Patriot Sylvester Tilton was seriously wounded.

## TOMS RIVER BLOCK HOUSE - March 24, 1782

R3



Louis S.  
Glanzman  
(1922 - 2013)

*Toms River  
Block House*  
Oil on Canvas  
2010

Approximately 200 red coats and local loyalists attacked the privateer base and salt works at Toms River. The Blockhouse force of just 25 fought back as loyalists burned the village to the ground, except for 2 loyalist homes. Patriot leader Capt. Joshua Huddy was among those captured and later hanged without a trial to avenge a loyalist death. Huddy's execution impacted the Paris Peace Treaty negotiations and is known as the Asgill Affair.

## LONG BEACH MASSACRE - October 1782

R4



Louis S.  
Glanzman  
(1922 - 2013)

*Barnegat Light  
Massacre*  
Oil on Canvas  
2009  
23 1/2 x 35 1/2

Patriot Privateer Capt. Andrew Steelman and 24 crewmen seized cargo from a sailing vessel that ran aground. Notified of their position by a loyalist spy, John Bacon's troop ambushed the sleeping crew that night, killing up to 21 Patriots and seizing the cargo. Governor Livingston later issued a warrant for "Bloody John Bacon" to be "captured dead or alive" for his "many atrocious and murderous acts along the shores."

# AFFAIR AT CEDAR CREEK BRIDGE -

## December 27, 1782

R5



Louis S.  
Glanzman  
(1922 - 2013)

*Last  
Documented  
Land  
Engagement*  
Oil on Canvas  
2009  
23 1/2 x 35 1/2

The last documented land engagement of the American Revolution. After searching several days for John Bacon, the Burlington Militia stopped at Cedar Bridge Tavern. Notified of the militia's position Bacon led a surprise attack and blocked their escape. A party of local townspeople came to his aid and allowed the wounded Bacon to escape. Patriot William Cook and loyalist Ichabod Johnson and John Reckless were killed. Others on both sides were injured."

# DEATH OF JOHN BACON -

## April 03, 1783

R6



Louis S.  
Glanzman  
(1922 - 2013)

*John Bacon at  
Rose's Tavern*  
Oil on Canvas  
2010  
23 1/2 x 29 1/2

Likely the last recorded casualty of the American Revolution. Militiamen caught up with John Bacon at Rose's Tavern (near Tuckerton.) Bacon attempted to evade capture but, wounded and outnumbered, surrendered. Regardless, Joel Cook, the brother of the William Cook killed at Cedar Bridge, bayoneted Bacon in the back "many times." Patriots then attempted to bury Bacon under the crossroad at Arney's Mount to prevent his soul from resting for all eternity.

# Winifred “Wini” Smart Quackenbush

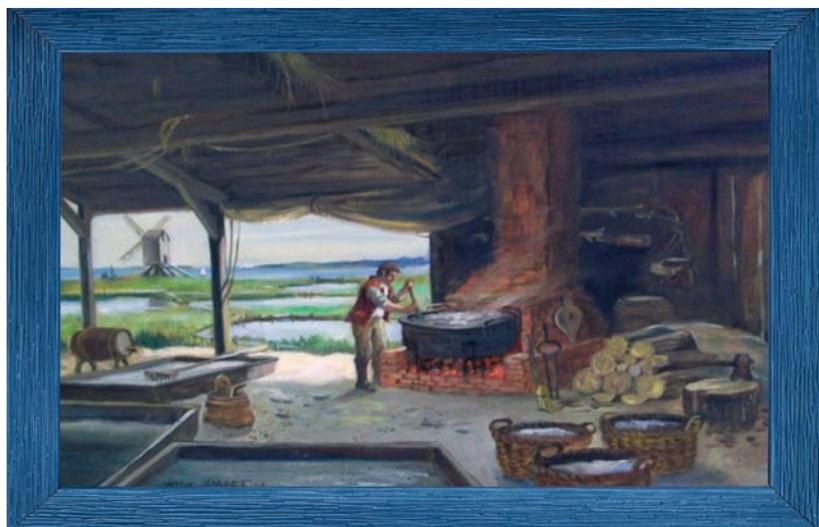
The British Empire strictly regulated the production and distribution of salt, a basic and indispensable product for the preservation of food and the production of gun powder.

For economic power reasons, the British imported salt from Liverpool in England. This process is documented in the book *Salt: A World History* (2002) by Mark Kurlansky.

As part of the move to independence, a large number of salt works were developed along the New Jersey Shore. In particular, the area that is now Ocean County developed some of the most important salt works.

The British and their loyalist associates raided and destroyed many of these salt works numerous times during the Revolutionary war. The patriots rebuilt and the process repeated itself.

Please consult the monograph on the topic: *The Revolutionary Saltworks of the New Jersey Coast*, Harry B. Weiss and Grace M. Weiss, 1959.



# Lenapehoking

William Cuffey (Cuffee), William Holmes and Oliver Cromwell were among the few Native Americans who served in the American forces from New Jersey. All three men served in the 2nd New Jersey Regiment. Cuffee was a resident of Stafford, Monmouth County (now Ocean County). He was twenty-two years old, stood 5' 7" tall, had Black hair and Black eyes. He enlisted in June 1778 and served nine months as a private in Captain Phillips' Company and was honorably discharged on March 1, 1779. Although his pension record states that he was an "Indian," there is some evidence that he was also partially African American.

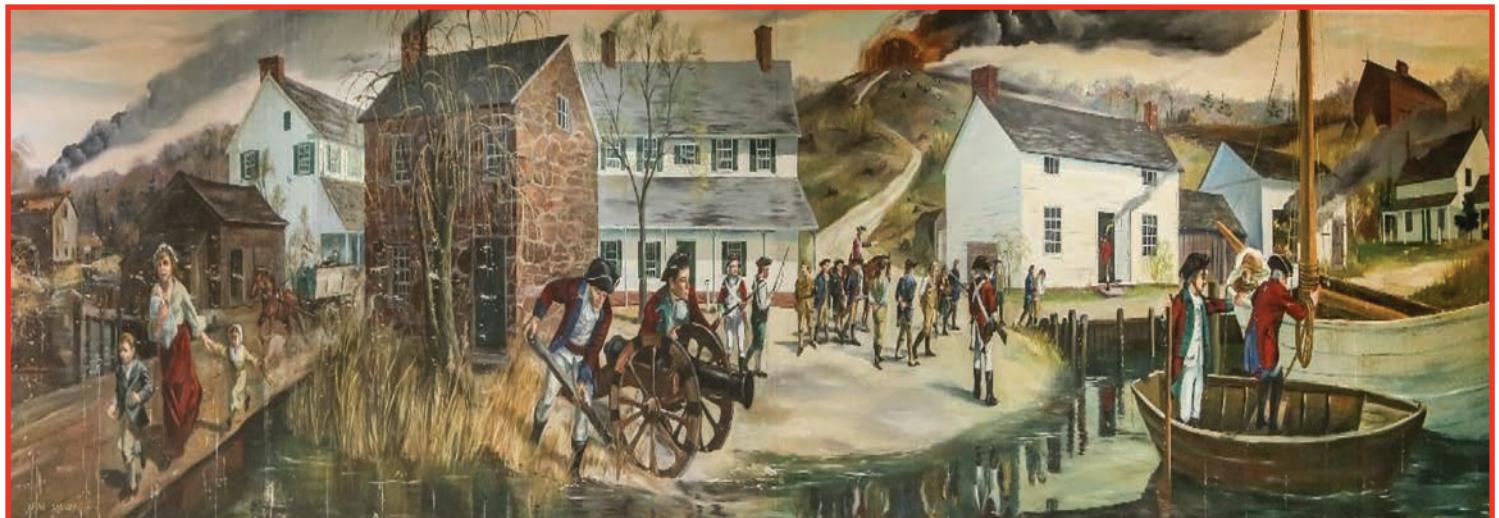
Adapted from [Forgotten Patriots – African American and American Indian Patriots in the Revolutionary War: A Guide to Service, Sources, and Studies](#), National DAR, 2008

At the time of the American Revolution, Lenape and free African Americans often associated and formed families. William and Amos Cuffee of Manahawkin volunteered for the Patriot cause. Their mother was Lenape and their father was African American. Each of the two sons ethnically identified themselves differently—one based on their mother's lineage and the other based on their father's. Kofi is apparently a Ghanaian word for a male child born on Friday.

Before European contact, the lands surrounding Cedar Bridge Tavern were home to a succession of Indigenous peoples. The migration of these people along the Cedar Bridge historic travel route is confirmed by the archeological evidence of "fire-cracked" rock by the bank of the north branch of the Wading River.

The people that the Europeans encountered have been identified by several names. Their surviving descendants refer to themselves as the Nanticoke Lenni-Lenape Tribal Nation. Present day Ocean County contains some of the richest Native American archeological sites in New Jersey.

Further information is provided by the Lenapehoking Reestablishment Project at [LRProject.org](http://LRProject.org).



*Attack at Toms River.*  
Painting Credit:  
Winifred "Wini" Smart Quackenbush.  
Oil on canvas.



# The Affair at CEDAR BRIDGE

Sunday December 6, 2026

10am - 4pm

Snow Date: January 3, 2027

Cedar Bridge Tavern Historic Site - 200 Old Halfway Road, Barnegat, NJ



## The Affair at Cedar Bridge 1782

The Affair at Cedar Bridge is the commemoration of the last documented land engagement of the American Revolutionary War that is purported to have taken place at the Ocean County Historic Site in Barnegat, NJ.

Refreshments including period drinks, NJ Fifes & Drums

Sea Dogs – Traditional Period Tavern musicians, Children's Games/Crafts, Blacksmith, Tavern Demonstrations, Period Clothing & Carpenter.

Tour 210 year old restored tavern.

Sunday, December 6, 2026 10 AM to 4 PM

Snow date – Sunday, January 3, 2027



Brought to you by the Ocean County Board of Commissioners  
Jennifer Bacchione, Sam Ellenbogen, Ray Gormley, Frank Sadeghi

Robert S. Arace – Chairman of Parks and Recreation



# CEDAR BRIDGE TAVERN HISTORIC SITE



Visit us at 200 Old Halfway Road, Barnegat, NJ

Open: 9AM - 4PM on Thursday, Friday & Monday, 10AM - 4 PM Saturday & Sunday

Cedar Bridge Tavern is purported to be the site of the last documented land engagement of the American Revolution. The tavern is a fully restored museum and the site encompasses 311 acres with a 3.5 mile walking trail and public programming held throughout the year including an annual commemoration of the Affair at Cedar Bridge held each December. The existing tavern building dates back to c.1816 and is among the oldest standing bars in New Jersey. Cedar Bridge Tavern is a gateway to learn about the post-industrial forest of the New Jersey Pine Barrens and 19th century farmsteads, taverns, consumerism, entertainment and foodways in the region.



**The Annual Commemoration of the last documented land engagement of the American Revolution held on the first Sunday in December**



Programs, tours (schools, scouts, clubs, groups, service organizations), exhibits, history presentations, guided historic nature walks, 3.5 mile trail, archery, scout project opportunities, scout programs. Limited Bus Fund to pay for transportation to programs.

Contact us at (732) 929-4769 or [cmclearen@co.ocean.nj.us](mailto:cmclearen@co.ocean.nj.us)

Check the ocean County Parks & Recreation newsletter for upcoming programs and the Cedar Bridge Tavern at [www.oceancountyparks.org](http://www.oceancountyparks.org)

# Court House Cannon Restoration



The restoration of the Toms River Cannon is now complete. After more than a year of conservation work by Lodestone Conservation in conjunction with the **Ocean County Department of Parks & Recreation Division of Cultural & Heritage** the cannon has returned to its granite pedestal in front of the 1850 Ocean County Courthouse.

The conservation effort focused specific treatments that included the careful removal of old paint, the reduction of corrosion using a controlled oxidation process, and the fabrication of a custom wooden tampion to protect and plug the muzzle. This work was undertaken not only to preserve a Revolutionary War-era artifact, but also to conserve the layered history associated with it.

The origins of the cannon remain uncertain. It lacks identifying markings, making it impossible to attribute it to a specific maker or foundry. Its unusual dimensions do not conform to standard military specifications of the period. Although the cannon has long been associated with the nearby Toms River Blockhouse, it does not match the typical form of a swivel gun as was used at the Blockhouse. It is therefore more likely that the cannon was used aboard a vessel, possibly in privateering. Beyond this, much of its early history has been lost.

The cannon reappears after the Revolutionary War, when it was recovered during dredging of the Toms River. Following this, the cannon changed hands several times, being owned in succession by Joseph Grover, Captain Reuben Potter, and later Surrogate Joseph Grover. At one point, it was buried on the Van Hise property (Washington St. and Hyers St.), where it remained for approximately a decade.

The cannon's current placement can be traced to the efforts of the Toms River Camera Club, which undertook the creation of a monument to commemorate the 125th anniversary of the Blockhouse Fight in 1907. Despite initial enthusiasm, the group faced skepticism and resistance from local businesses unwilling or unable to contribute financially—likely influenced by the economic uncertainty of the Panic of 1907. Undeterred, the Camera Club successfully raised funds for the granite monument and brass plaque. With the permission of the **Ocean County Board of Freeholders (now Commissioners)**, the cannon was placed in front of the 1850 Courthouse, where it continues to stand as a symbol of both Revolutionary-era history and a look into twentieth-century civic dedication.



# Declaration Of Independence: A Transcription

*Note: The following text is a transcription of the Stone Engraving of the parchment Declaration of Independence (the document on display in [the Rotunda at the National Archives Museum](#).) The spelling and punctuation reflects the original.*

---

**In Congress, July 4, 1776**

**The unanimous Declaration of the thirteen united States of America**, When in the Course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the Laws of Nature and of Nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.

---

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. Prudence, indeed, will dictate that Governments long established should not be changed for light and transient causes; and accordingly all experience hath shewn, that mankind are more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed. But when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same Object evinces a design to reduce them

*Continued on page 30*

under absolute Despotism, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such Government, and to provide new Guards for their future security. -- Such has been the patient sufferance of these Colonies; and such is now the necessity which constrains them to alter their former Systems of Government. The history of the present King of Great Britain is a history of repeated injuries and usurpations, all having in direct object the establishment of an absolute Tyranny over these States. To prove this, let Facts be submitted to a candid world.

He has refused his Assent to Laws, the most wholesome and necessary for the public good.

He has forbidden his Governors to pass Laws of immediate and pressing importance, unless suspended in their operation till his Assent should be obtained; and when so suspended, he has utterly neglected to attend to them.

He has refused to pass other Laws for the accommodation of large districts of people, unless those people would relinquish the right of Representation in the Legislature, a right inestimable to them and formidable to tyrants only.

He has called together legislative bodies at places unusual, uncomfortable, and distant from the depository of their public Records, for the sole purpose of fatiguing them into compliance with his measures.

He has dissolved Representative Houses repeatedly, for opposing with manly firmness his invasions on the rights of the people.

He has refused for a long time, after such dissolutions, to cause others to be elected; whereby the Legislative powers, incapable of Annihilation, have returned to the People at large for their exercise; the State remaining in the mean time exposed to all the dangers of invasion from without, and convulsions within.

He has endeavoured to prevent the population of these States; for that purpose obstructing the Laws for Naturalization of Foreigners; refusing to pass others to encourage their migrations hither, and raising the conditions of new Appropriations of Lands.

He has obstructed the Administration of Justice, by refusing his Assent to Laws for establishing Judiciary powers.

He has made Judges dependent on his Will alone, for the tenure of their offices, and the amount and payment of their salaries.

He has erected a multitude of New Offices, and sent hither swarms of Officers to harrass our people, and eat out their substance.

He has kept among us, in times of peace, Standing Armies without the Consent of our legislatures.

He has affected to render the Military independent of and superior to the Civil power.

He has combined with others to subject us to a jurisdiction foreign to our constitution, and unacknowledged by our laws; giving his Assent to their Acts of pretended Legislation:

For Quartering large bodies of armed troops among us:

For protecting them, by a mock Trial, from punishment for any Murders which they should commit on the Inhabitants of these States:

*Continued from page 30*

For cutting off our Trade with all parts of the world:

For imposing Taxes on us without our Consent:

For depriving us in many cases, of the benefits of Trial by Jury:

For transporting us beyond Seas to be tried for pretended offences:

For abolishing the free System of English Laws in a neighbouring Province, establishing therein an Arbitrary government, and enlarging its Boundaries so as to render it at once an example and fit instrument for introducing the same absolute rule into these Colonies:

For taking away our Charters, abolishing our most valuable Laws, and altering fundamentally the Forms of our Governments:

For suspending our own Legislatures, and declaring themselves invested with power to legislate for us in all cases whatsoever.

He has abdicated Government here, by declaring us out of his Protection and waging War against us.

He has plundered our seas, ravaged our Coasts, burnt our towns, and destroyed the lives of our people.

He is at this time transporting large Armies of foreign Mercenaries to compleat the works of death, desolation and tyranny, already begun with circumstances of Cruelty & perfidy scarcely paralleled in the most barbarous ages, and totally unworthy the Head of a civilized nation.

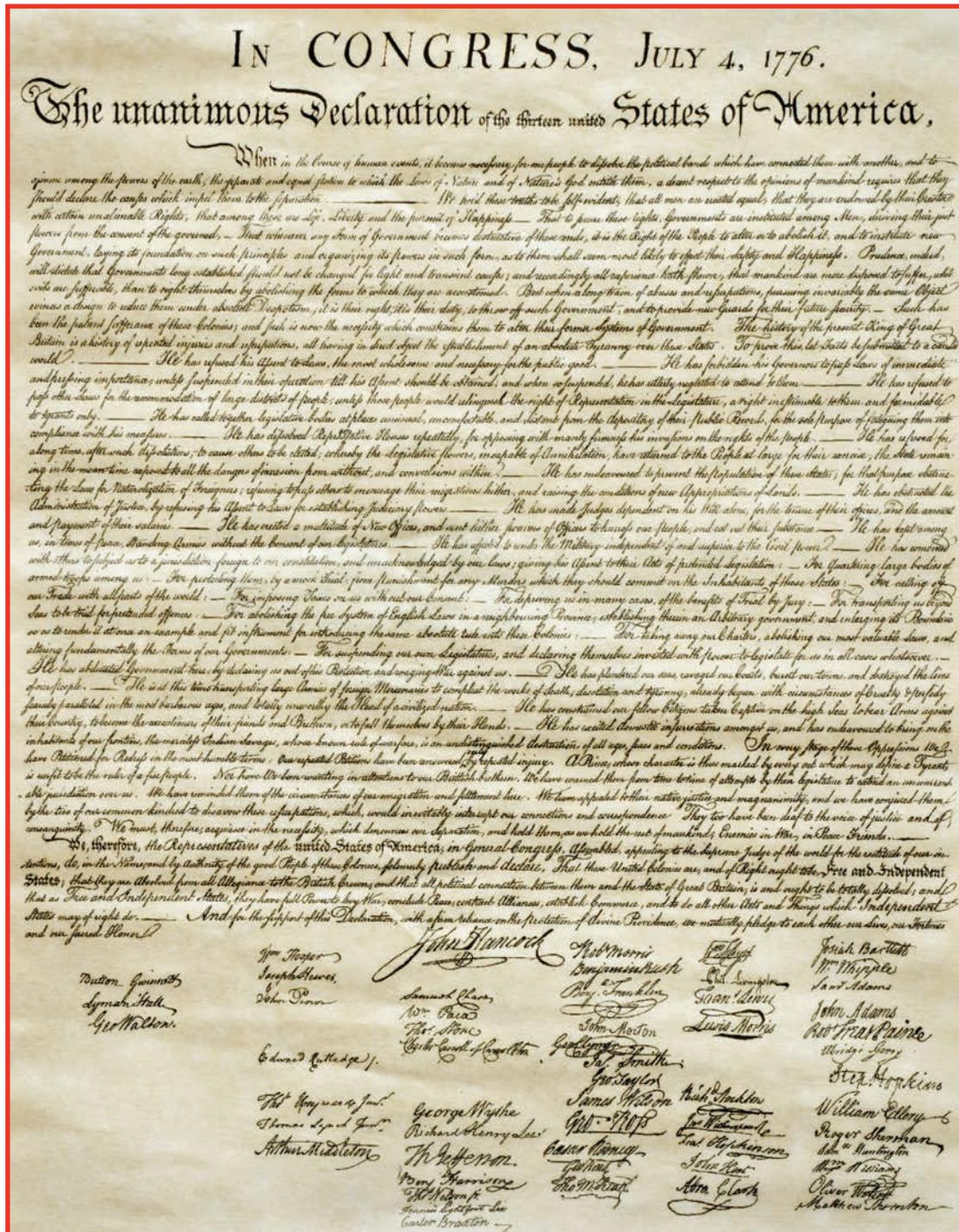
He has constrained our fellow Citizens taken Captive on the high Seas to bear Arms against their Country, to become the executioners of their friends and Brethren, or to fall themselves by their Hands.

He has excited domestic insurrections amongst us, and has endeavoured to bring on the inhabitants of our frontiers, the merciless Indian Savages, whose known rule of warfare, is an undistinguished destruction of all ages, sexes and conditions.

In every stage of these Oppressions We have Petitioned for Redress in the most humble terms: Our repeated Petitions have been answered only by repeated injury. A Prince, whose character is thus marked by every act which may define a Tyrant, is unfit to be the ruler of a free people.

Nor have We been wanting in attentions to our Brittish brethren. We have warned them from time to time of attempts by their legislature to extend an unwarrantable jurisdiction over us. We have reminded them of the circumstances of our emigration and settlement here. We have appealed to their native justice and magnanimity, and we have conjured them by the ties of our common kindred to disavow these usurpations, which, would inevitably interrupt our connections and correspondence. They too have been deaf to the voice of justice and of consanguinity. We must, therefore, acquiesce in the necessity, which denounces our Separation, and hold them, as we hold the rest of mankind, Enemies in War, in Peace Friends.

We, therefore, the Representatives of the united States of America, in General Congress, Assembled, appealing to the Supreme Judge of the world for the rectitude of our intentions, do, in the Name, and by Authority of the good People of these Colonies, solemnly publish and declare, 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; and that as Free and Independent States, they have full Power to levy War, conclude Peace, contract Alliances, establish Commerce, and to do all other Acts and Things which Independent States may of right do. And for the support of this Declaration, with a firm reliance on the protection of divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our Lives, our Fortunes and our sacred Honor.





FREDERICK DOUGLASS.

# Frederick Douglass on the Fourth of July

## Explanation from the National Constitution Center, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

*Frederick Douglass was born an enslaved person in Maryland, later escaping into freedom and emerging as one of the leading abolitionist voices in the nineteenth century. In July 1852, he delivered this Independence Day address to the Rochester Ladies' Anti-Slavery Society. It became one of Douglass's most famous speeches—criticizing the chasm between America's Founding principles and the institution of slavery. In the speech, Douglass lamented that Independence Day wasn't a day of celebration for enslaved people. At the same time, he urged his audience to read the U.S. Constitution not as a pro-slavery document, but as a "GLORIOUS LIBERTY DOCUMENT."*

### EXCERPT

This, for the purpose of this celebration, is the 4th of July. It is the birthday of your National Independence, and of your political freedom. This, to you, is what the Passover was to the emancipated people of God. It carries your minds back to the clay, and to the act of your great deliverance; and to the signs, and to the wonders, associated with that act, and that day...

Fellow Citizens, I am not wanting in respect for the fathers of this republic. The signers of the Declaration of Independence were brave men. . . . They loved their country better than their own private interests; and, though this is not the highest form of human excellence, all will concede that it is a rare virtue, and that when it is exhibited, it ought to command respect. He who will, intelligently, lay down his life for his country, is a man whom it is not in human nature to despise. Your fathers staked their lives, their fortunes, and their sacred honor, on the cause of their country. In their admiration of liberty, they lost sight of all other interests. . . . With them, nothing was "settled" that was not right. With them, justice, liberty and humanity were "*final*"; not slavery and oppression. You may well cherish the memory of such men...

Fellow-citizens, pardon me, allow me to ask, why am I called upon to speak here to-day? What have I, or those I represent, to do with your national independence? Are the great principles of political freedom and of natural justice, embodied in that Declaration of Independence, extended to us? and am I, therefore, called upon to bring our humble offering to the national altar, and to confess the benefits and express devout gratitude for the blessings resulting from your independence to us?...

Fellow-citizens; above your national, tumultuous joy, I hear the mournful wail of millions! whose chains, heavy and grievous yesterday, are, to-day, rendered more intolerable by the jubilee shouts that reach them. If I do forget, if I do not faithfully remember those bleeding children of sorrow this day, "may my right hand forget her cunning, and may my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth!" To forget them, to pass lightly over their wrongs, and to chime in with the popular theme, would be treason most scandalous and shocking, and would make me a reproach before God and the world. My subject, then fellow-citizens, is **AMERICAN SLAVERY**. I shall see, this day, and its popular characteristics, from the slave's point of view. Standing, there, identified with the American bondman, making his wrongs mine, I do not hesitate to declare, with all my soul, that the character and conduct of this nation never looked blacker to me than on this 4th of July! . . .

What, to the American slave, is your 4th of July? I answer; a day that reveals to him, more than all other days in the year, the gross injustice and cruelty to which he is the constant victim. . . . I will not enlarge further on your national inconsistencies. The existence of slavery in this country brands your republicanism as a sham, your humanity as a base pretense, and your Christianity as a lie. It destroys your moral power abroad; it corrupts your politicians at home. It saps the foundation of religion; it makes your name a hissing, and a bye-word to a mocking earth. It is the antagonistic force in your government, the only thing that seriously disturbs and endangers your Union. It fetters your progress; it is the enemy of improvement, the deadly foe of education; it fosters pride; it breeds insolence; it promotes vice; it shelters crime; it is a curse to the earth that supports it; and yet, you cling to it, as if it were the sheet anchor of all your hopes. Oh! Be warned! Be warned! A horrible reptile is coiled up in your nation's bosom; the venomous creature is nursing at the tender breast of your youthful republic; *for the love of God, tear away, and fling from you the hideous monster, and let the weight of twenty millions crush and destroy it forever!* . . .

Allow me to say, in conclusion, notwithstanding the dark picture I have this day presented of the state of the nation, I do not despair of this country. There are forces in operation, which must inevitably, work the downfall of slavery. "*The arm of the Lord is not shortened*," and the doom of slavery is certain.

I, therefore, leave off where I began, with hope. While drawing encouragement from the "Declaration of Independence," the great principles it contains, and the genius of American Institutions, my spirit is also cheered by the obvious tendencies of the age. . .

\*<https://constitutioncenter.org/declaration/primary-sources/what-to-the-slave-is-the-fourth-of-july>

# DAN SOPER LIBERTY BELL

**Daniel Soper (1933-2014)**, descendant of Revolutionary War Patriots, crafted this yoke and frame as an ode to the Liberty Bell in Philadelphia. Mr. Soper, of Manahawkin, was a professional cabinet maker and woodworker. He completed this project around 1994 with physical limitations as a result of a stroke. **Thomas J. Guinta (1921-2011)**, a descendant of Italian-American immigrants, repurposed the carriage and wheels. The bell came from Tuckerton, allegedly salvaged from a shipwreck off Long Beach Island.

Dan Soper was descended from American Revolutionary War Patriots who served in the Manahawkin Militia (Company 5, 2nd Monmouth). The Soper family fought in most of the local conflicts against Loyalist John Bacon and his gang. In fact, prior to the Revolution, the boatbuilding Soper family employed John Bacon at Soper's landing. Bacon became the area's most notorious Pine Robber and repeatedly harassed the Soper family.

*The bell is on loan from the collection of the Stafford Township Historical Society.*



# OCEAN COUNTY 1850 COURT HOUSE



250<sup>th</sup> Anniversary  
American Revolutionary War  
1775 - 1783

Ocean County  
New Jersey

