



NEWS

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October 6, 2009

AMERICA'S DECISIVE REVOLUTIONARY WAR VICTORY CELEBRATED OCTOBER 17-19 Yorktown Victory Center & Yorktown Battlefield Weekend Military Interpretive Programs Yorktown Day Parade and Commemorative Ceremony on October 19

YORKTOWN, Va. – To mark the 228th anniversary of America's decisive Revolutionary War victory at Yorktown, a variety of engaging hands-on military interpretive programs and tours will be held on Saturday and Sunday, October 17-18, at Yorktown Battlefield and the Yorktown Victory Center.

The weekend events are a prelude to the Yorktown Day parade and commemorative ceremony on Monday, October 19, in historic Yorktown and at Yorktown Battlefield to mark the official anniversary of the British surrender to American forces. In 1781, following a nine-day bombardment, British forces in Yorktown under Lord Charles Cornwallis surrendered more than 8,000 soldiers and sailors to the combined American and French armies, commanded by General George Washington. This represented the close of the last major military action of the American Revolution, ending the fighting phase of the war and effectively granted independence to the American colonies following a six-and-a-half-year military struggle.

October 17-18: Revolutionary War Interpretive Programs, Exhibits at Yorktown Victory Center

The **Yorktown Victory Center**, a museum of the American Revolution, will feature military demonstrations, including musket and artillery drills, and hands-on interpretive programs in re-creations of a Continental Army encampment and 1780s farm during its annual "**Yorktown Victory Celebration**," Saturday and Sunday, October 17 and 18, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Visitors can see a rare early broadside printing of America's Declaration of Independence on exhibit for the first time in the museum's Declaration of Independence Gallery. The historic document was printed in Boston soon after the Declaration was adopted by the Continental Congress in Philadelphia on July 4, 1776, and before an engrossed, or handwritten, copy of the document on parchment was signed by members of Congress on August 2, 1776. Thematic gallery exhibits at the Yorktown Victory Center provide eyewitness accounts of the American Revolution, describe the convergence of forces on Yorktown in 1781 for the climactic military engagement of the revolution, and examine the development of the Constitution and Bill of Rights and how people from many different cultures shaped a new society.

Visitors to the re-created Continental Army encampment will be invited to experience Revolutionary War military life firsthand by enrolling in "A School for the Soldier," offering opportunities to drill with wooden muskets and apply tactical skills in mock combat, as well as learn about soldiers' provisions and sleeping quarters. The program also explores methods of troop communication, espionage during the war and the importance of earthworks during a siege. "School" sessions will be offered at 10:05 a.m. and 12:35 and 4:05 p.m. on both days. Visitor participatory artillery demonstrations will be held at 11:05 a.m. and 3:05 p.m. each day. More than two dozen Revolutionary War re-enactors also will be on hand to demonstrate military life and tactics.

Visitors to the re-created 1780s farm can observe open-hearth cooking at 11:35 a.m. and take part in 18th-century games at 4:35 p.m. At 2:05 p.m. each day, “The Price of Liberty” engages visitors in a role-playing demonstration that provides insight to the sacrifices and hardships endured by Americans who sought independence, including military and political leaders, soldiers, farmers, merchants, women and slaves.

Participation in event activities is included with **Yorktown Victory Center** admission of \$9.25 for adults and \$5.00 for ages 6 through 12. Children under six are admitted free. The Yorktown Victory Center, open 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily year-round, is located on Route 1020 near the Colonial Parkway in Yorktown. “Yorktown Victory Celebration” is funded in part by the York County Arts Commission. For more information, call (888) 593-4682 toll-free or (757) 253-4838, or visit www.historyisfun.org.

October 17-18: Anniversary Programs at Yorktown Battlefield

The **Yorktown Battlefield**, scene of the surrender concluding the climactic battle of the American Revolution, will offer a variety of special programs, tours and military demonstrations to mark the 228th anniversary of the British surrender at Yorktown. These special activities will highlight the 1781 siege of Yorktown and provide a look at the victory by General George Washington that secured American independence.

On Saturday and Sunday, the Royal Marines, called the most trusted troops in the British army, will camp at the Yorktown Battlefield Visitor Center, showing how the troops lived in the field. The camps are open to the public from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. and the Marines will provide demonstrations of Revolutionary War tactics and weapons both days at 11:15 a.m. and 1:45 p.m.

Also on Saturday, the Royal Artillery, a re-creation of the British artillery regiment, will demonstrate the firing of an 18-pounder siege cannon at 1:15 p.m., 2:15 p.m., 3:15 p.m. and 4:15 p.m. The Royal Artillery will also provide a special night firing at 7 p.m. on Saturday, as part of an evening program at the Visitor Center providing insight into the events that took place during the siege after the sun went down.

A wide selection of interpretive programs and tours will be available on Sunday, October 18. The Moore House will be open to tour from 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., on the 228th anniversary of the negotiations there that ended the siege. Also on Sunday, a guided walking tour to Redoubts 9 & 10 at 10:15 a.m. will discuss the importance of the British fortifications and the pivotal hand-to-hand assaults against these positions that helped secure the Allied victory at Yorktown.

Two presentations on the Siege of Yorktown will be made in the Yorktown Battlefield Visitor Center on Sunday. At 1:15 p.m., Dr. Paul Lockhart, Professor of History and Director of Graduate Programs in History at Wright State University, will present a program entitled “Steuben: The Man Behind the Discipline,” discussing Baron von Steuben and his contributions to the American Revolutionary cause and laying the groundwork for the U.S. Army for generations to come; a book signing in the museum store will follow. At 2:45 p.m., historian and author Dr. Robert Selig will present a lecture on “Campaign Artillery at the Siege of Yorktown.”

All programs begin at the **Yorktown Battlefield Visitor Center** (1000 Colonial Parkway) located at the eastern end of the Colonial Parkway, 12 miles from Williamsburg. On Monday, October 19, admission to Yorktown Battlefield will be free as part of the Yorktown Day celebration. Admission on Saturday, October 17 and Sunday, October 18 is \$10.00 per adult, under age 16 admitted free, which also includes admission to Historic Jamestowne. National Park Service passports are honored. For more information, call (757) 898-2410 or visit www.nps.gov/colo.

October 19: Yorktown Day Commemorative Events

Every year since the British surrender, there have been patriotic observances held in Yorktown on the anniversary of the surrender. The modern day observance traces its roots to 1922, when the Daughters of the American Revolution began an annual wreath-laying ceremony, which set the tradition upon which the current Yorktown Day is based. Today, the Yorktown Day Association, comprised of 13 civic, patriotic and government organizations, coordinates the traditional commemorative events.

The official Yorktown Day parade steps off at 10:30 a.m. The route will follow Yorktown's Main Street and pass in front of the Yorktown Victory Monument, erected in 1881 to commemorate the military victory a century before. Included in the 35 parade units are representatives of all branches of the U.S. military, fife and drum corps, JROTC and NJROTC units, and patriotic organizations.

The Patriotic Exercises will commence at the Yorktown Victory Monument at 11:15 a.m. with the annual pageant of flags, a colorful display that includes the American and French national colors, the flags of the 50 states and the District of Columbia, and the flags of the 13 Yorktown Day Association members. During the Patriotic Exercises, greetings from France, a key American ally in the defeat of the British in 1781, will be delivered by the French Embassy, and the keynote address will be given by historian and author Dr. Robert Selig. At the conclusion of the Patriotic Exercises, a wreath will be placed on the Yorktown Victory Monument in memory of those who fought and died during the siege of Yorktown in 1781.

At 12:30 p.m., the 3rd United States Infantry (The Old Guard) will present a demonstration of 18th-century tactical skills on the Yorktown Battlefield near the National Park Service Visitor Center. The demonstration will include the Commander-in-Chief's Guard and the Old Guard Fife & Drum Corps. The Old Guard is the oldest infantry unit in the active Army, predating the Constitution of the United States to 1784. As a unit of the Military District of Washington, the 3rd U.S. Infantry is charged with the unique mission of serving as the U.S. Army's official ceremonial unit, performing tactical infantry missions and providing security for the nation's capital.

At 2:30 p.m., a 1.5 mile ranger-guided tour will discuss the surrender of the British army on October 19, 1781. The program will begin at the National Park Service Visitor Center and will retrace the route taken by the British army to the site of their ceremonial surrender.

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