

# INDIAN KING GAZETTE



Supporting New Jersey's Historic Treasure – the Indian King Tavern Museum

## What's New at the 2026 Haddonfield Skirmish

### Breakfast with the Troops Brings Revolutionary Debate to the Table

Residents and visitors alike will have the opportunity to step back into the tense days of the American Revolution during **Breakfast with the Troops**, a unique living-history event that combines food, spirited debate, and military interpretation.

Co-hosted by the Friends of the Indian King Tavern Museum and The Haddon Fortnightly, the event invites guests to share breakfast while encountering both British and Continental soldiers who have gathered to discuss the growing unrest in the colonies. Rather than a peaceful morning meal, attendees may find themselves seated in the middle of heated conversations about loyalty to the Crown, independence, taxes, liberty, and the uncertain future of America.

Throughout the morning, reenactors portraying soldiers from opposing sides of the conflict will interact with guests, demonstrating the uniforms, equipment, and personalities of Revolutionary-era troops. The experience is designed to immerse guests in the difficult choices ordinary colonists faced during the Revolutionary War.

Taverns such as the Indian King Tavern served as gathering places for political discussion, military planning, and the exchange of news. Breakfast with the Troops help modern audiences understand how everyday conversations over meals and in taverns helped shape the movement toward independence.

As the nation continues commemorating the 250th anniversary of the American Revolution, events such as Breakfast with the Troops offer a chance not only to learn history, but to experience it firsthand.

For tickets and additional information, guests are encouraged to visit <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/breakfast-with-the-troops-tickets-1986550360605?aff=oddtcreator>



### America's 250th and the 2026 Haddonfield Skirmish

Each year, the Haddonfield Skirmish brings history to life in the streets surrounding the **Indian King Tavern**, but 2026 raises the bar as we lean into the spirit of the nation's 250th. This year's event blends beloved traditions with a slate of new, immersive experiences that invite visitors not just to watch history, but to step directly into it.

One of the most exciting additions is **colonial-era cricket**, taking place on the lawn of Haddonfield Friends School. Before baseball became America's pastime, cricket was widely played throughout the colonies, and this living history demonstration offers a rare glimpse into the sport as it would have been experienced in the 18th century. Expect period dress, authentic rules, and plenty of opportunities to learn how the game was played in the years leading up to the Revolution.

Expanding our hands-on historical programming, this year's Skirmish welcomes a range of skilled interpreters and tradespeople. Visitors can explore the **craft of a colonial chocolatier**, gaining insight into how chocolate was prepared and enjoyed in early America, long before it became a modern-day treat. A **working armorer** will demonstrate the tools and techniques used to maintain weapons and equipment essential to Revolutionary War soldiers.

Adding to the depth of the historical experience, a **Revolutionary War surgeon** will offer a fascinating, if not slightly sobering, look at 18th-century medicine. This program provides a powerful reminder of the realities faced by soldiers during the war, highlighting both the ingenuity and limitations of medical practices at the time.

Of course, no Skirmish would be complete without iconic historical figures. This year, we are thrilled to welcome **Benjamin Franklin**, who will appear throughout the day to share insights, stories, and wit from one of America's most influential minds. Whether discussing science, diplomacy, or his famously colorful personality, Franklin's presence promises to be both educational and entertaining.

For families and younger visitors, the timeless tradition of **Punch & Judy** joins the lineup. This lively puppet show, popular in colonial Ameri-



ca, brings humor and theatricality to the day's offerings, connecting audiences to a form of entertainment that would have been familiar to people of the era.

While there is much that is new, many of the Skirmish's most beloved traditions return. Visitors can once again experience the powerful **storytelling of Ned Hector**, whose role in the Revolutionary War continues to inspire audiences. The ever-popular **Sea Dogs** return with their signature energy and maritime flair, while **Sword & Swagger** brings the past to life through dynamic demonstrations of colonial-era sword fighting.

And for our youngest patriots, crowd favorites like the mustering of the kids and the always-enthusiastic **yelling contest** return, ensuring that the next generation can take part in the fun and spirit of the day.

With expanded programming, new demonstrations, and the return of cherished traditions, the 2026 Haddonfield Skirmish offers something for everyone. Whether you come to learn, to play, or simply to enjoy a day steeped in history, this year's event promises to bring 1776 vividly into 2026.

# “Quaker Day” and the Peace Testimony of the Haddonfield Friends

Submitted by Haddonfield Friends Meeting

The Quaker Peace Testimony, first declared in 1660, declares in part: “We utterly deny all outward wars and strife and fightings with outward weapons, for any end, or under any pretense whatsoever; and this is our testimony to the whole world...” For this reason, and in our firm belief that there is that of God in each of us, Haddonfield Friends Meeting does not directly participate in the Skirmish.

Instead, for the past few years, we have hosted our own “Quaker Day” on the first Saturday in June. This separate event held on our grounds is offered in contrast to, but never “competition” with, the traditional Skirmish. We do this out of friendly kinship with the good people of Had-

donfield, and in memory of those Haddonfield Quakers who, like ourselves, denied the violence of the American Revolution.

On January 20, 1777, Quakers Thomas Redman of Haddonfield and his brother-in-law were arrested and ordered to jail for refusing to pledge allegiance to the newly created New Jersey state government. They did so citing the tenets of both religious liberty and the Quaker Peace Testimony. They spent two months in a cell below the courthouse before being released and issued a token fine, one which they gently but firmly refused to pay. We hold both Friends up as examples of our Quaker ideals and remember them as well as Haddonfield’s other conscientious objectors each “Quaker Day”.

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# The Haddon Fortnightly host Tea with Martha Washington

In colonial America, tea was far more than a beverage—it was a ritual, a social glue, and, at times, a quiet act of resistance. From bustling port cities like Philadelphia to small towns across New Jersey, tea gatherings brought people together to exchange news, build relationships, and reinforce community bonds. These moments of hospitality often took place in parlors and drawing rooms, where conversation flowed as freely as the tea itself.

For women in particular, tea gatherings offered a vital space for influence and connection. While formal political power was largely denied to them, these social settings became informal networks where ideas were shared and opinions shaped. Figures like Elizabeth Drinker, a Philadelphia Quaker and keen observer of daily life, frequently recorded such occasions in her diary. In one entry, she noted simply yet tellingly, “Drank tea at home,” a phrase that appears often in her writings. Though brief, these entries reveal how central tea was to the rhythm of social life—an expected and meaningful part of the day.

Tea also took on political significance in the years leading up to the American Revolution. Following events like the Boston Tea Party, many colonists—especially women—participated in boycotts of British tea. In its place, they gathered to drink “liberty teas” made from local herbs, transforming a familiar social ritual into a patriotic statement.

It is in this rich historical tradition that we invite you to step back in time and experience a colonial tea gathering for yourself.

Join us for a delightful afternoon at a **Tea with Martha Washington**, where history comes alive through conversation, customs, and community. This special event will take place on **Sunday, May 31, 2026, at 1:00 PM** at **The Haddon Fortnightly**.

Enjoy tea and light refreshments while learning about the social traditions that shaped colonial America—and meet one of its most iconic hostesses.

es. Whether you are a history enthusiast or simply looking for a charming afternoon, this gathering promises to be both educational and memorable. To purchase tickets, send an email to: [Ginny@TheHaddonFortnightly.org](mailto:Ginny@TheHaddonFortnightly.org) or by phone: Marie Dimatties: 856-261-6911.

Come share a tradition that once united a nation—one cup at a time.

## Special Lecture on the New Jersey Constitution on June 2nd

Want to learn more about New Jersey’s revolutionary Constitution of 1776? Grace Church, The Haddonfield Historical Society, and the Indian King Tavern Historic Site are partnering to present “From Ridicule to Respect: 250 Years of the New Jersey Constitution”.

This program will feature a presentation by the former Director of the Center for State Constitutional Studies and Distinguished Professor of Law Emeritus at Rutgers Law School, Robert Williams. He is the author of multiple books including *The New Jersey State Constitution* (Oxford University Press). Dr. Williams’s talk will cover the evolution of the New Jersey Constitution from its beginning in 1776 to today, covering such issues as voting eligibility, the abolition of slavery and women’s rights.

**June 2, 2026, 7pm** at **Grace Church, 19 Kings Hwy E, Haddonfield**



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# “Finding Flora’s Footsteps”:

*New Research Shows Connections between Enslaved Worker at the Indian King Tavern and Important Underground Railroad Site*

On March 21 of 2026, the Indian King Tavern Historic Site hosted a fascinating panel discussion at an event called “Finding Flora’s Footsteps: Slavery and Emancipation at Haddonfield’s Indian King Tavern.” Speakers included Jo Ann Laughlin, author of the 2024 book *Stratton Hall: A House with a Name*, as well as founder Avis Wanda McClinton and researcher Shamele Jordan of the 339 *Manumissions and Beyond Project*.

A young woman named Flora – an enslaved worker at the Indian King – was manumitted by tavern-keeper Hugh Creighton in 1791, shortly after his retirement. But what became of Flora after she was freed? For years nothing was known about Flora outside of her manumission certificate. But that has now changed. Author Jo Ann Laughlin lives in the Swedesboro house that was once the home of Mary Stratton – daughter of the Haddonfield tavernkeepers Hugh and Mary Creighton. Laughlin’s research has uncovered that Flora likely had at least two children, named Ishmael and Merinda, both of whom were enslaved at Stratton Hall and later freed as young adults.

## “Flora is dead! She died in the house of her son Ishmael”

Records show continued connections between Flora and her children. After manumission, both Ishmael and Merinda resided in Small Gloucester, a free Black community near Swedesboro. According to Stratton family letters, Flora passed away in the house of her son Ishmael, now a homeowner. Her daughter Merinda married Doran Willson, founding member of the Mt. Zion African Methodist Episcopal Church in Woolwich, NJ. The church is today listed on the Nation Register of Historic Places due to its importance as a stop on the “Greenwich Line” of the Underground Railroad, operated by Harriet Tubman. Descendants of Merinda and Doran served with the Union Navy during the Civil War and are buried in the veterans’ section of the church burial ground.



*Finding Flora presenters l to r Shamele Jordan, Joella Clamen, Avis Wanda McClinton and Jo Ann Laughlin*

## Looking at the Larger Picture: 339 Manumissions and Beyond Project

Flora and her children were among many enslaved residents of our community. Founded in 2022 by Avis Wanda McClinton of Pennsylvania, the 339 *Manumissions and Beyond Project* aims to uncover many more stories like Flora’s, focusing on documenting the names and lives of over 300 African Americans who were enslaved and then manumitted by Quaker members of the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting. As part of this endeavor, researcher Shamele Jordan of the Lawnside Historical Society has poured through

records while creating a database of enslaved African - Americans manumitted by Quakers of the Haddonfield Monthly Meeting. The project hopes more research will further illuminate the post-manumission stories of formerly enslaved residents, like Flora, of South Jersey communities.

Jo Ann Laughlin’s book, *Stratton Hall: A House with a Name*, is currently available from your favorite book seller. If you would like to volunteer with or contribute to the 339 *Manumissions and Beyond project*, information is available on their website at: [339manumissions.org](http://339manumissions.org)



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# Votes for Women – 1776!

## How a Revolutionary Change in Pronouns Temporarily Gave New Jersey Women the Vote

In the summer of 1776, Haddonfield residents went to the polls, to elect representatives in New Jersey's new state government, created by New Jersey's brand-new constitution. But who had voting rights at that time?

While New Jersey residents were mobilizing to fight in a revolution, they were also debating voting rights. When New Jersey had been under British colonial rule, the governor and a council of advisors were chosen directly by the British King or Queen. There was also a General Assembly chosen by voters – who were only wealthy, male, property owners.

But 1776 was a year of change. New Jersey citizens began writing petitions demanding an expansion of voting rights. Without the vote, asked a group of Salem County residents, what incentive do they “have in the present state of affairs to induce us to spill our blood?”

New Jersey's 1776 Constitution expanded voting rights in multiple ways. Voters no longer needed to be property owners: total assets of 50 pounds were enough to qualify. But what about the issue of gender? Under the old rules, women had not been explicitly prohibited from voting, but the law's use of the pronoun “he” to describe voters acted as a prohibition. The 1776 Constitution similarly uses the pronoun “he” to describe the qualifications to hold political office. However, when describing voters, “he” is substituted for the nongendered, plural “they.”

That small change left open the possibility of voting rights for property-owning women. Voting regulations in 1790 and 1797 made the change explicit, using the pronouns “he or she” to describe voters.

Women around the country took notice. In a 1797 letter, Abigail Adams wrote whom she would have voted for if Massachusetts, like “liberal” New Jersey, had allowed votes for women. However, the change was short-lived. In 1807, the New Jersey

disenfranchised women, together with African Americans and noncitizen immigrants.

Want to know more? Detailed information and images of original documents are available online as part of the Museum of the American Revolution's virtual exhibit, “When Women Lost the Vote”. The permanent exhibit also includes a display on the topic.



Museum of the American Revolution Exhibit, Philadelphia

## WHAT'S WRONG WITH THIS PICTURE?



Given what dental care was like in the 1770s, this sketch is probably not historically accurate. “Perfect smiles” were a rarity, and dental procedures were very unpleasant experiences. Fortunately, a lot has changed since then.

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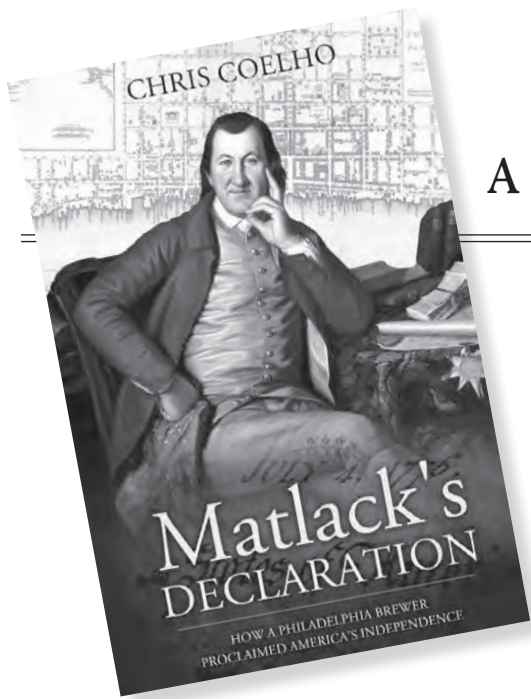


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# Beyond the DECLARATION

## A Closer Look at Haddonfield-born Revolutionary Scribe Timothy Matlack

When the American Revolution came, Matlack's tavern connections aided his rise as a powerful leader. He helped write the Pennsylvania Constitution and served in leadership roles in state government. As clerk to the Continental Congress, he penned the official version of the Declaration of Independence on display in the National Archives.

### Matlack the Soldier: Combat in Princeton and Grieving for a Son

Although Matlack was almost forty years old when

the Revolutionary War began, he joined the Philadelphia militia. As Colonel Matlack, he took part in the Battle of Princeton. While Timothy avoided major injury in war, his son Mordecai was not so lucky. Aged only sixteen, Mordecai was serving in the Continental Navy on the *Randolph*, when it came under fire while trying to break the



Timothy Matlack Jr, whose father constructed the first buildings at the Indian King Tavern site, is best remembered today as the man who handwrote the famous copy of the declaration signed by the Founders. In his excellent biography, *Matlack's Declaration*, Chris Coelho brings to life the fuller story of this Haddonfield-born revolutionary.

In honor of the 250th anniversary of the Declaration, here are some highlights from Matlack's full and fascinating life:

### Philadelphian with Haddonfield Roots

Timothy Matlack was born in Haddonfield on May 28, 1736, a few years after his father, Quaker brewer Timothy Matlack Sr, had constructed the first building at the Indian King Tavern Site. While the family would relocate to Philadelphia about eight years later, Timothy always remembered his New Jersey roots. Relatives visiting him in his old age recorded him asking about Haddonfield and reminiscing about picking apples off a tree in neighbor John's Gill's orchard.

### From Tavern-Going, Cock-Fighting Enthusiast to Revolutionary Politician



A hardware merchant and then a brewer, as a young man Matlack spent a lot of time socializing in taverns and enjoying the sports of horse racing and cock fighting. After he fell into debt,

he was disowned by the Philadelphia Quaker Meeting due to what they considered an irresponsible lifestyle.

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blockade of Charleston Harbour. A cannonball ignited the ship's gunpowder supply, causing a massive explosion which killed over three hundred on board, including Mordecai Matlack. Timothy later gave tribute to his son in a speech:

"I mourn a darling son, once the fond hope and comfort of my heart – The dreadful fatal blast which sent the *Randolph* into splinters, scattered his mangled limbs in the air and they fell, black and disfigured, a prey to the fishes of the sea. – I mourn his loss but would preserve his name."

### Matlack and African Americans

In Matlack's younger years, when he enjoyed sports like cock-fighting, he frequently socialized in mixed-race company. When he later became an important politician, satirical poems written by political opponents used racism to ridicule Matlack for these associations. A poem by Loyalist minister Jonathan Odell mocked: "game-cocks and negroes were his whole delight."

Matlack supported Pennsylvania's passage of the Gradual Abolition Act of 1780 as a step towards "loosing the bands of oppression" by "attending to the cries of our fellow men, though differing in color from us."

### Founding Member of the "Free Quakers"

The Philadelphia Friends (Quaker) Meeting did not support the American Revolution, and disowned members who participated in revolutionary activity. After the war, Timothy Matlack helped found a new religious congregation called the "Society of Free Quakers" for people who had been disowned by their Quaker meetings, mostly for supporting the Revolution. The Free Quaker Meeting House, which he helped design, still stand today in Philadelphia, just a few blocks from Independence Hall.

### Matlack and Dinosaurs: America's First Paleontologist?

In later life, Matlack joined the American Philosophical Society. In 1787 he and Casper Wistar presented a paper to the Society which described "a large thigh bone found in Upper Cretaceous deposits near Woodbury Creek, Gloucester County, NJ." Today, scientists think it was probably a foot bone of a Hadrosaurus, the same species as the "Haddy" skeleton discovered in Haddonfield in 1858. The Matlack and Wistar paper is likely the first documented dinosaur bone find in the United States!

*Matlack's Declaration* by Chris Coelho is currently available from your favorite book seller.

# Remembering the "Goddard Broadside"

## New Jersey's Official Copy of the Declaration of Independence was Sent by the Continental Congress to Haddonfield

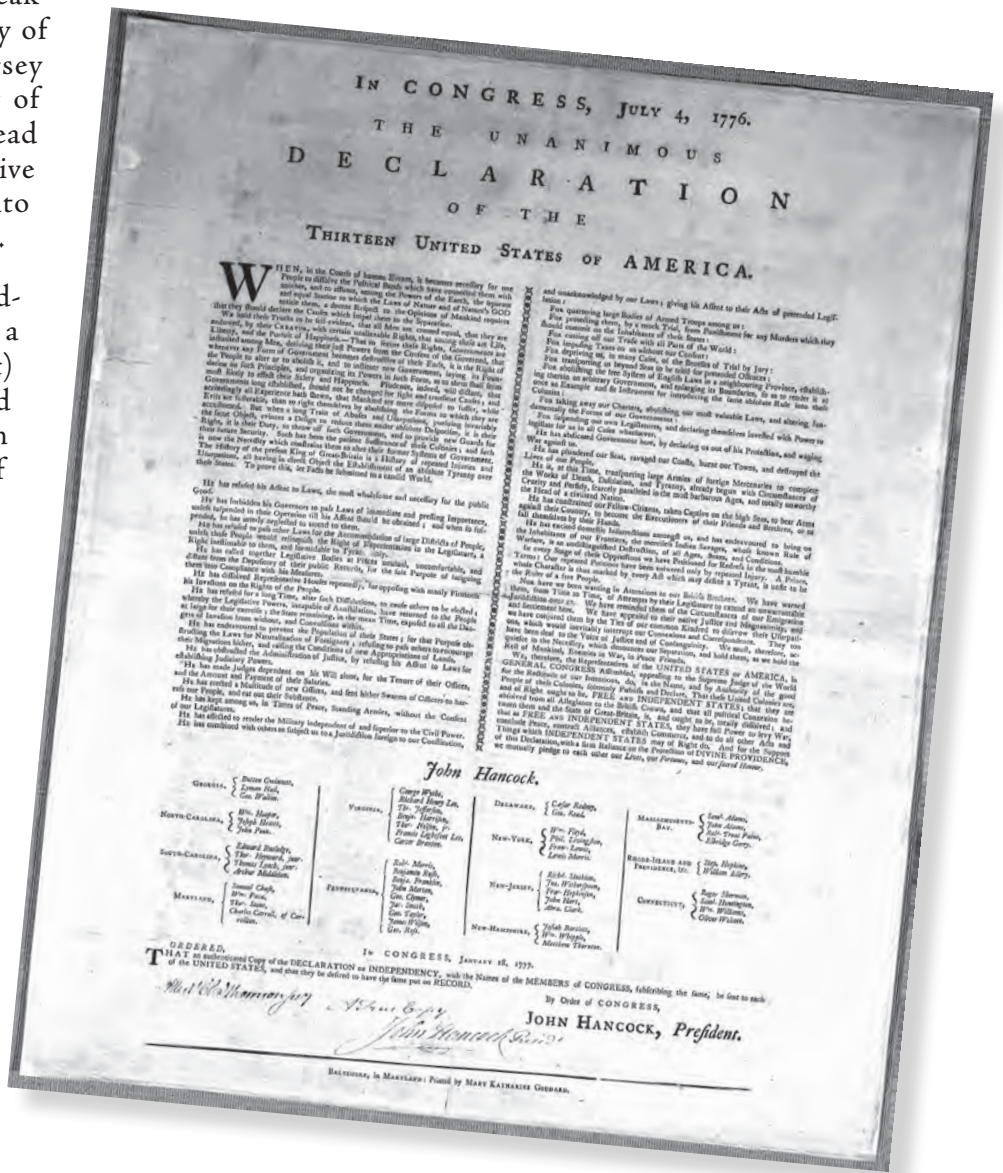


In January of 1777, during the time that New Jersey's revolutionary government was meeting at the Indian King Tavern site in Haddonfield, printer Mary Katharine Goddard was commissioned by the Continental Congress to prepare new printed copies of the Declaration of Independence. They were then sent to the governments of each of the thirteen newly independent states, to be entered into the official state records. The President of Congress, John Hancock wrote:

**"As there is not a more distinguished event in the history of America, than the Declaration of her Independence . . . I am therefore commanded by Congress to transmit to you the enclosed copy of the Act of Independence"**

New Jersey's official copy of the Declaration arrived in Haddonfield in February of 1777. On February 27th, the Speaker of General Assembly of the State of New Jersey ordered that this copy of the Declaration be read aloud during a legislative session and entered into the government record.

The "Goddard Broadside" – (a broadside is a one-page printed sheet) – was the first printed copy of the Declaration to include the names of the individual signers. It also included a reference to Goddard as the official printer of the document. Goddard's copy of the Declaration is the only copy in which a woman's name is found. To learn more about the life of printer Mary Katharine Goddard, and to see a copy of the Goddard Broadside, please visit the temporary display at the Indian King Tavern Museum.





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# March Into Reading: Celebrating Our History Through Stories

March 1 – June 6, 2026

This spring, the Haddonfield Public Library and the Indian King Tavern Museum are proud to present March Into Reading, a community-wide reading challenge running from March 1st through June 6th, 2026.

Inspired by the spirit of the American Revolution, this special program invites readers of all ages to explore the people, events, and ideas that shaped our nation. The Revolutionary era was fueled not only by soldiers and statesmen, but by words—pamphlets, letters, newspapers, and bold declarations that inspired debate and action. March Into Reading encourages participants to step into that world through books.

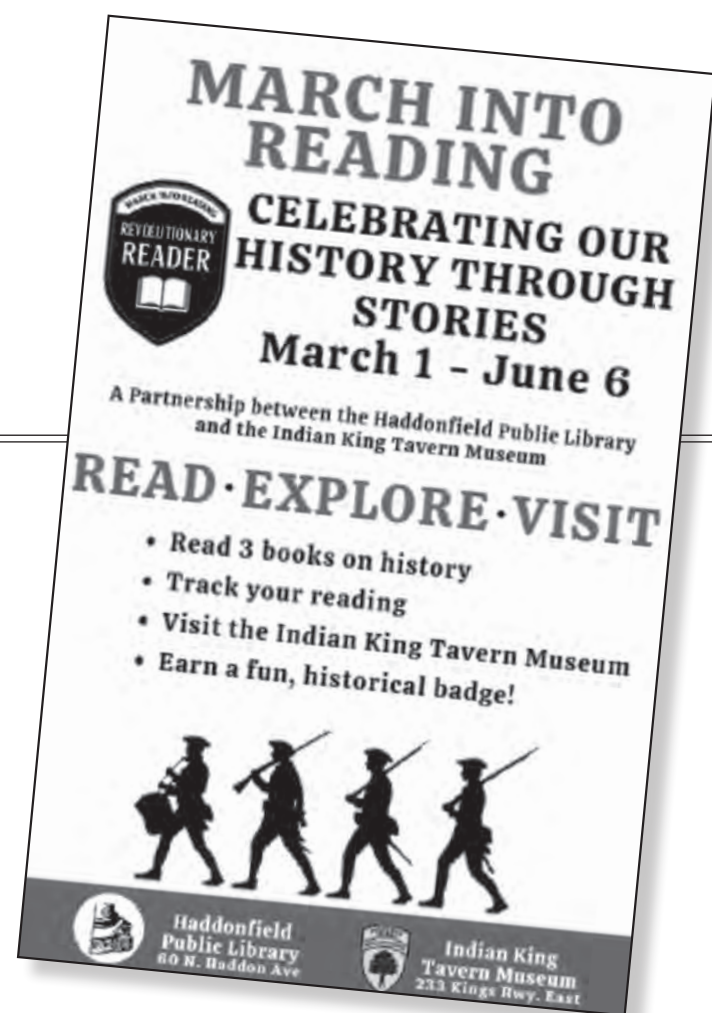
Readers may choose biographies of Revolutionary figures, historical fiction set during the War for Independence, or nonfiction works examining the political debates and daily life of the 1770s. Young readers can discover what colonial childhood looked like, while adults may explore how new governments were formed and freedoms defined.

The program concludes on June 6, 2026, echoing the pivotal summer of 1776 when independence and new systems of government were being debated across the colonies. It is a reminder that reading and civic engagement have always gone hand in hand.

Participants who complete the challenge will receive a special badge declaring them a “Revolutionary Reader.” This badge celebrates not only the accomplishment of finishing the program, but also a commitment to learning, curiosity, and community.

Families, classrooms, and individual readers are encouraged to join together. Set a goal, track your progress, and share what you discover. Whether you read a few carefully chosen books or dive deeply into Revolutionary history, every page brings the past to life. Pick up and/or hand in your book log at the Haddonfield Public Library or the Indian King Tavern Museum to receive your badge.

As we prepare for America’s 250th anniversary, March Into Reading offers a meaningful way to connect with our shared history—one chapter at a time.



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# America Turns 250—and New Jersey Helps Lead the Way!



In 2026, the United States will celebrate its **250th birthday**. This marks the year 1776, when the colonies decided they wanted to be free from British rule.

On **July 4, 1776**, leaders approved the **Declaration of Independence**, saying they would no longer be ruled by a king. But once they made that choice, they faced a big question: **How do we govern ourselves?**

## New Jersey Acts Fast

New Jersey did not wait. In the summer of 1776, New Jersey's leaders knew they needed their own government.

On **July 2, 1776**, New Jersey wrote its **first Constitution**. A constitution is a set of rules that

explains how a government works. New Jersey wrote one while the Revolutionary War was still going on!

The Constitution created leaders, made laws, and helped keep order during a confusing time.

## Why New Jersey's Constitution Was Special

New Jersey's 1776 Constitution included some new ideas. It allowed **some women and free people of color to vote**, which was unusual for that time.

In 2026, New Jersey will celebrate **250 years of its Constitution**, along with **250 years of American independence**. Together, these anniversaries remind us that freedom means making fair rules—and following them.

# Activity: Write Your Own Constitution!

Just like New Jersey did in 1776, you can create rules for your own group.

### Step 1: Name Your Community

(Examples: Your classroom, your family, your club, or your town)

Our community is called: \_\_\_\_\_

### Step 2: Choose Leaders

Who helps make decisions?

- One leader
- A small group
- Everyone votes

### Step 3: Make the Rules

Write 3 rules that will help your community be fair and safe.

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### Step 4: Rights and Responsibilities

What is one right everyone should have?

\_\_\_\_\_

What is one responsibility everyone must follow?

\_\_\_\_\_

### Step 5: Agree Together

A constitution only works if people agree to follow it!

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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# Skirmish Safety 101

A Few Tips to Stay Safe and Have a Great Time!

The Haddonfield Skirmish is one of many reenactments that take place throughout the country. Reenactment is a hobby for many of the participants, accompanied by extensive historical research to present appropriate events.

However, please note that REAL BLACK POWDER, which is an explosive, is being used in both the muskets and cannons. Therefore, you will notice safety measures, not only for visitors, but participants as well.

## Skirmish Safety 101

- ★ Please **STAY ON THE SIDEWALK** during any musket fire.
- ★ Observe and **DO NOT CROSS** any barriers, either blockades or police tape etc.
- ★ Never, **NEVER** pick up what you think is a cartridge/charge. Bring it to the attention of a reenactor or official related to the event. They contain **REAL BLACK POWDER**.
- ★ The reenactment is **LOUD**. If your hearing is sensitive, please wear ear plugs or cover your ears.
- ★ Animals and very young children—who are not accustomed to the noise— **SHOULD NOT** be around musket fire.
- ★ **LISTEN** and **COMPLY** with all directions given to you during the event. They are for your safety.
- ★ Enjoy and feel free to engage with reenactors **BEFORE** or **AFTER** the Skirmish, not during!

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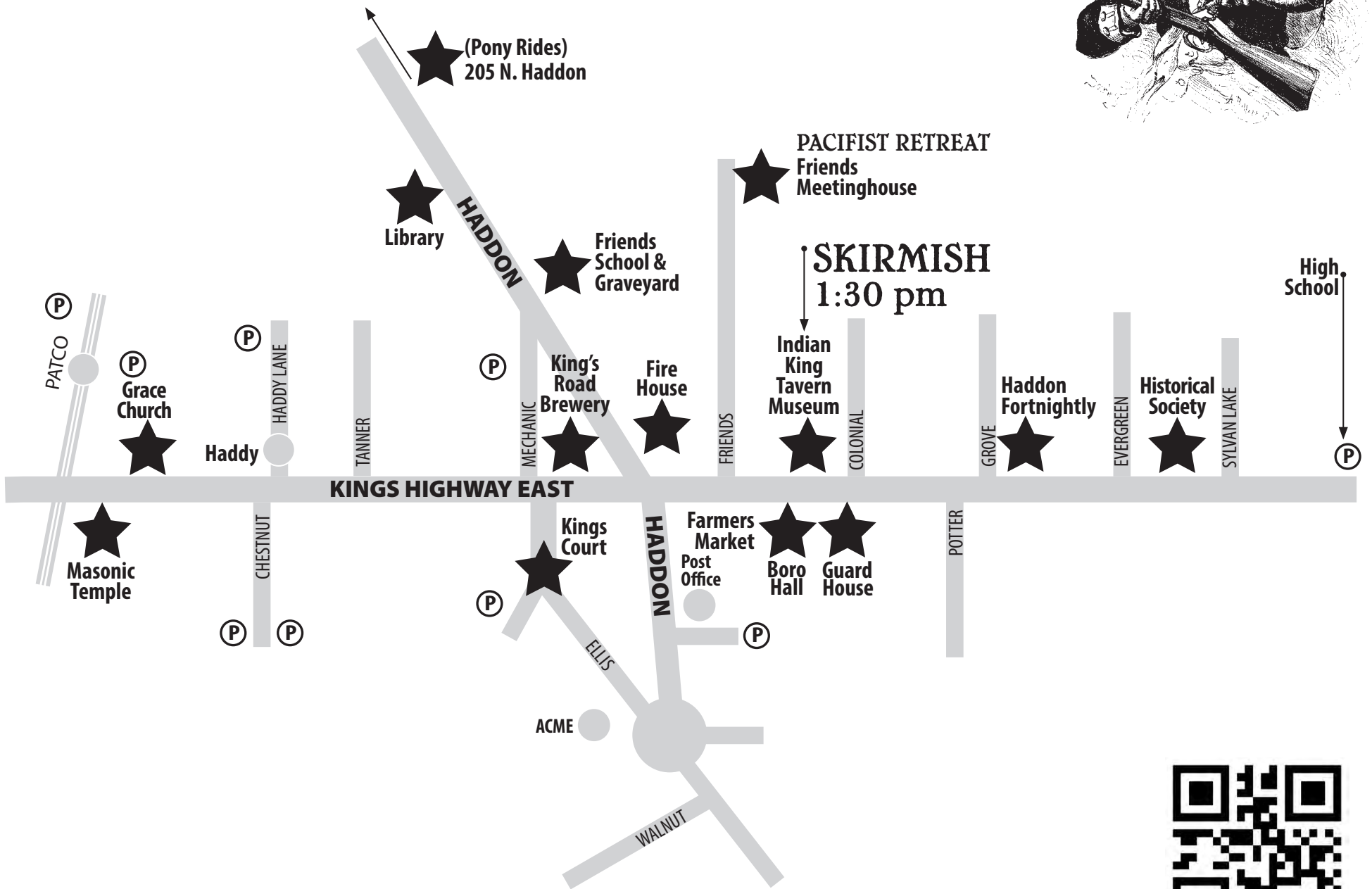
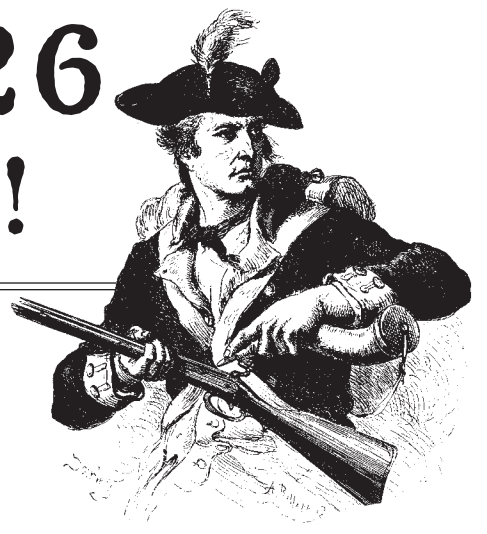
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# Skirmish • JUNE 6, 2026

## The British Are Coming!



updated schedule and map at [HaddonfieldSkirmish.com](http://HaddonfieldSkirmish.com)

### The British Are coming.... Claim Your Land!

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**Friends of the Indian King Tavern Museum**  
 233 Kings Highway East  
 Haddonfield NJ 08033  
 IndianKingFriends.org | HaddonfieldSkirmish.com  
**Museum Hours** Wed to Sat, 10 to 12n, 1 to 4pm. Sun 1 to 4pm  
**Tour Information** 856-429-6792

**The Gumnut Group, LLC**  
 258 Kings Highway East  
 Haddonfield NJ 08033  
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# June 6th Events & Activities

Map: inside back cover, page 11

Location	9:00	9:30	10:00	10:30	11:00	11:30	12:00	12:30	1:00	1:15	1:30	2:00	
Indian King Tavern Museum	Museum tours   Meet the 2nd PA Regiment, 2nd NJ, Continental Marines Kids activities   Regimental Cook												
Kings Highway East		Muster the Kids!	The Clash!	Along Kings Highway: Fire & Drums Pillage & Plunder Troop Meet & Greet									Muster the Kids!
History Faire at Grove Street	The History Faire: Exhibitors including silhouette cutting, caricatures, local historical organizations & much more!												
Hay Bale Theater at Borough Hall	Performances at the Hay Bale Theater throughout the day including musical groups and Revolutionary reenactors!												
Kings Court	British Encampment and Colonial trades demonstrations   Armorer   Colonial Hot Chocolate  Revolutionary War Surgeon Punch and Judy Show!												
Haddonfield Financial Planning (205 N. Haddon Ave.)	Pony Rides (\$10 / ride)												
King's Road Brewing Co.	Battle of the Brews! Purchase your official 2026 Haddonfield Skirmish T-shirt! Beer tasting with our Colonial Brewmeister												
Haddon Fire Company No. 1 (Haddon Ave)	Colonial Fire Fighting Museum Tours of Engine Room & Vehicles												
The Haddon Fortnightly	Breakfast with the Troops! (\$2.26 adults; \$1.76 kids; ages 3 & under free) Meet the Daughters of the American Revolution from 10am-1pm Water and star-shaped pretzels for sale												
Historical Society of Haddonfield	Tours of Greenfield Hall (no charge)												
	Historic Walking Tour (\$25)	Historic Walking Tour (\$25)											
Haddonfield Friends School	Learn to Play Colonial Era Cricket!												
Haddonfield Friends Graveyard & Meeting House	Quaker Day (Pacifist Retreat) 9:30am: Graveyard Tours (hourly on the half hour) 10am: 10-minute Quaker Worship Demonstrations (hourly on the hour)												
Backyard @ Wildfether	Haddonfield Farmers Market (opens at 8:30am)												

Times & Locations Subject to change.  
 Please keep out of the road during & immediately following the Skirmish, and **do not pick up charges.**



updated events at [HaddonfieldSkirmish.com](https://HaddonfieldSkirmish.com)

# The SKIRMISH

HADDONFIELD, NJ | JUNE 6, 2026

## America's 250th and New Jersey's Constitutional Moment



In 2026, the United States will mark the 250th anniversary of American independence, known as the Semiquincentennial. This milestone commemorates the events of 1776, when thirteen colonies declared themselves free from British rule and set in motion the creation of a new nation based on revolutionary ideals of liberty and self-government.

While July 4, 1776, stands as the most familiar date of the American Revolution, independence did not occur all at once. Across the colonies, leaders were forced to confront an immediate and practical question: how to govern without a king. In New Jersey, that question demanded swift action.

In June 1776, New Jersey's Provincial Congress met as royal authority collapsed. Governor William Franklin remained loyal to the Crown, leaving the colony without effective leadership at a critical moment.

On July 2, 1776, New Jersey adopted its first state constitution, transforming itself from a royal colony into an independent state. Written during wartime, the constitution es-

tablished a functioning government with a governor, legislature, and judiciary—ensuring stability while the Revolution continued.

The 1776 New Jersey Constitution was also notable for its expanded vision of political participation. By granting voting rights to “all inhabitants” meeting a property requirement, it allowed some women and free people of color to vote, an uncommon provision for the era.

In 2026, New Jersey will observe not only America's 250th anniversary, but also the 250th anniversary of its own Constitution. This dual commemoration highlights the state's central role in translating revolutionary ideals into working government.

As the nation reflects on its founding, New Jersey's experience reminds us that the Revolution was more than a declaration—it was a process. Independence required decisions, debate, and the courage to build new institutions in uncertain times. Those choices, made in 1776, continue to shape our democracy today.

## Haddonfield Skirmish - Sat., June 6

A Full Day of Revolutionary Events for All Ages

Events on back cover or [HaddonfieldSkirmish.com](https://HaddonfieldSkirmish.com)

