

OHIO SUPPLEMENT



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On July 4th, our nation celebrates the 245th anniversary of our Declaration of Independence from Great Britain. The power and brilliance of that document cannot be overstated. It has been said that while the Constitution provides the legal and governmental framework for our republic, it is the Declaration of Independence with its riveting assertions for freedom and equality that is our inspiration.

According to the Library of Congress website citing an exhibition on the Declaration of Independence in 1997, Thomas Jefferson drafted the document in Philadelphia “behind a veil of Congressionally imposed secrecy in June 1776 for a country wracked by military and political uncertainty.” Jefferson led a committee of five men that included Benjamin Franklin and John Adams charged with drafting a declaration of independence. Jefferson was the principal author with Adams then Franklin followed by the other members of the committee making changes. From Jefferson’s “original Rough draught”, a total of 86 revisions were made before the document was brought to the Second Continental Congress for a vote on July 4, 1776.

Within the Declaration of Independence is found a litany of specific grievances against the King, but what we are most familiar with is the big-picture theme: It is not only our right but our responsibility, by the grace of our Creator, to establish a system of government where certain unalienable rights exist and said government only exists through the consent of the governed. As profoundly simple as that concept seems now, what is more incredible is considering the deep thinkers and courageous leaders throughout history who had lived and ruled prior to that time, never before had anyone bothered to write it down.



Timeline

June 7 - Congress, meeting in Philadelphia, receives Richard Henry Lee's resolution urging Congress to declare independence.

June 11 - Thomas Jefferson, John Adams, Benjamin Franklin, Roger Sherman, and Robert R. Livingston appointed to a committee to draft declaration of independence.

June 12-27 - At the request of the committee, Jefferson drafts a declaration that is the basic text of his “original Rough draught.” Jefferson’s draft is reviewed by the committee before being submitted to the Congress.

July 1-4 - Congress debates and revises the Declaration of Independence.

July 2 - Congress declares independence as the British fleet and army arrive at New York.

July 4 - Congress adopts the Declaration of Independence in the morning of a bright, sunny, but cool Philadelphia day. John Dunlap prints the Declaration of Independence. These prints are now called "Dunlap Broadside." Twenty-four copies are known to exist, two of which are in the Library of Congress. One of these was Washington's personal copy.

July 5 - John Hancock, president of the Continental Congress, dispatches the first of Dunlap's broadsides of the Declaration of Independence to the legislatures of New Jersey and Delaware.

July 6 - *Pennsylvania Evening Post* prints the first newspaper rendition of the Declaration of Independence.

July 8 - The first public reading of the Declaration is in Philadelphia.

July 9 - Washington orders that the Declaration of Independence be read before the American army in New York from his personal copy.

Citation: *Library of Congress website - www.loc.gov/exhibits/declara/declara2.html*

We should never forget the prominence of the phrases “endowed by their Creator” and “with a firm reliance on the protection of Divine Providence” near the beginning and ending of the Declaration of Independence. Faith is our Alpha and Omega. It was in the days of the founding of our nation; may it continue to be always.

Happy Independence Day to all Sir Knights and Ladies.

In Knightly Courtesy,
R. Thomas Starr, KCT, Right Eminent Grand Commander