



Farmville - Prince Edward Historical Society

P.O. Box 546

Farmville, Virginia 23901

July, 2012

“Declaration of Independence: The Virginia Seven”

Jennings Custis

**Tuesday, July 17, 2012
7:00 p.m.**

Farmville Train Station

Guests Always Welcomed

Board Meets at 6:00 p.m.

Our speaker, Jennings Story Custis, resides in Rice, VA. He is a graduate of Hampden Sydney College, and currently teaches Latin, History, and Government, and is Athletics Assistant at Fuqua School in Farmville.

“The Virginia Seven”

George Wythe
Richard Henry Lee
Th Jefferson
Wm Harrison
Th Nelson jr.
Francis Lightfoot Lee
Garler Braxton

When the Second Continental Congress came together on May 10, 1775 it was, in effect, a reconvening of the First Continental Congress. Many of the same 56 delegates who attended the first meeting were in attendance at the second, and the delegates appointed

the same president (Peyton Randolph) and secretary (Charles Thomson). Notable new arrivals included Benjamin Franklin of Pennsylvania and John Hancock of Massachusetts. Within two weeks, Randolph was summoned back to Virginia to preside over the House of Burgesses; he was replaced in the Virginia delegation by Thomas Jefferson, who arrived several weeks later. Henry Middleton was elected as president to replace Randolph, but he declined, and Hancock was elected president on May 24. Mr. Custis plans to discuss each of the seven signers from Virginia and concentrate on the less known signers.

The **Declaration of Independence** was a statement adopted by the Continental Congress on July 4, 1776, which announced that the thirteen American colonies, then at war

with Great Britain, regarded themselves as independent states, and no longer a part of the British Empire. John Adams had put forth a resolution earlier in the year, making a subsequent formal declaration inevitable. A committee was assembled to draft the formal declaration, to be ready when congress voted on independence. Adams persuaded the committee to select Thomas Jefferson to compose the original draft of the document, which congress would edit to produce the final version. The Declaration was ultimately a formal explanation of why Congress had voted on July 2 to declare independence from Great Britain, more than a year after the outbreak of the American Revolutionary War. The Independence Day of the United States of America is celebrated on July 4, the day Congress approved the wording of the Declaration.

One signer of the Declaration, George Walton, representing Georgia at the Continental Congress, was born in Prince Edward County, Virginia, in 1741.



John Trumbull's “Declaration of Independence, July 4, 1776”



Artist: John Trumbull – Commissioned 1817; purchased 1819:
placed 1826 in the Capitol Rotunda

The painting includes portraits of 42 of the 56 signers and 5 other patriots. The artist sketched the individuals and the room from life.

Chronology of Events

1776

- 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 a declaration of independence. American army retreats to Lake Champlain from Canada.
- June 12-27 – Jefferson, at the request of the committee, drafts a declaration, of which only a fragment exists. Jefferson's clean, or "fair" copy, the "original Rough draught," is reviewed by the committee. Both documents are in the manuscript collections of the Library of Congress.
- June 28 – A fair copy of the committee draft of the Declaration of Independence is read in 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 of July 6 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.
- July 19 – Congress orders the Declaration of Independence engrossed (officially inscribed) and signed by members.
- August 2 – Delegates begin to sign engrossed copy of the Declaration of Independence. A large British reinforcement arrives at New York after being repelled at Charleston, S.C.

1777

- January 18 – Congress, now sitting in Baltimore, Maryland, orders that signed copies of the Declaration of Independence printed by Mary Katherine Goddard of Baltimore be sent to the states.

Source: Library of Congress

Upcoming Programs

August 21, 2012 – to be announced

September 18, 2012 – Program by David E. Johnson, from Midlothian, on "*John Randolph of Roanoke*"

New Members:

Harriet & Brian Vincent – Farmville
Dr. Jimmy Gates – Rice

This Day in July in Prince Edward County History

- 7-1-1900** Leslie Fogus joins Farmville police.
- 7-1-1934** Craddock-Terry commences manufacturing shoes.
- 7-1-2000** Longwood College assumes new designation as Longwood University
- 7-2-1896** Solomon Marable hanged for the murder of Mrs. Pollard
- 7-3-1902** The first automobile makes its appearance in Farmville; it was driven by Mr. A.F. Herman of Richmond on his way to Lynchburg
- 7-4-1776** George Walton (born near Farmville, ca 1741) signs Declaration of Independence as delegate from Georgia
- 7-6-1901** Lightning strikes the Presbyterian Church steeple causing fire and \$300 in damage
- 7-7-1901** Bottling house at Lithia Springs burned
- 7-10-1927** Amandus Cox, livery stable operator, died
- 7-10-1928** First traffic light installed at Third and Main streets
- 7-11-1861** "Hampden-Sydney Boys" military company surrenders after battle of Rich Mountain in present-day West Virginia
- 7-12-1864** Birth of Henry R. McIlwaine at Hampden-Sydney (Virginia State Librarian, 1907-1934)
- 7-13-1781** Notorious British cavalryman, Colonel Banastre Tarleton, raids area around Prince Edward Court House village
- 7-16-1832** Hampden-Sydney literary society requests that Bible be taught as a college course
- 7-17-1825** James T. Gray, Farmville tobacconist, born
- 7-17-1843** First class meets at Farmville Female Seminary, which was founded in 1839
- 7-18-1955** A three-judge Federal Court rules the Prince Edward County will have to desegregate its public schools
- 7-22-1903** Southside Telephone Company chartered
- 7-23-1864** Dr. J.R. Spencer born
- 7-23-1836** The Mineralogical Society of Virginia formed in Worsham
- 7-26-1940** Farmville is the nation's hot spot. Thermometer tops 135° and then explodes!
- 7-27-1896** The Pythians reorganize their lodge here.

The Friends of Sailor's Creek Battlefield Historical State Park (FoSCBHSP)

Participates in the Virginia State Parks mission to conserve natural, scenic, historic and cultural resources of the commonwealth and to provide recreational and educational opportunities consistent with good stewardship of these lands, water and facilities that leaves them unimpaired for future generations. You too can become involved.

Membership is \$10.00 Yr. beginning in July
Contact Dr. William E. Thompson, President for details

or email/call

foscdbhsp@gmail.com or (804) 561-7510