



Information Resource Center
Public Affairs Section
U.S. Embassy – Buenos Aires

“4TH OF JULY IS INDEPENDENCE DAY”

“...For those gallant first Americans, such a Nation as ours may have seemed like an unattainable dream. Their concept was revolutionary: a government of, by, and for the people...”

President Barack Obama, July 2, 2010

Independence Day honors the birthday of the United States of America and the adoption of the Declaration of Independence on July 4, 1776. It's a day of picnics and patriotic parades, a night of concerts and fireworks, and a reason to fly the American flag.



Drafted by Thomas Jefferson between June 11 and June 28, 1776, the Declaration of Independence is at once the nation's most cherished symbol of liberty and Jefferson's most enduring monument. Here, in exalted and unforgettable phrases, Jefferson expressed the convictions in the minds and hearts of the American people. The political philosophy of the Declaration was not new; its ideals of individual liberty had already been expressed by John Locke and the Continental philosophers. What Jefferson did was to summarize this philosophy in "self-evident truths" and set forth a list of grievances against the King in order to justify before the world the breaking of ties between the colonies and the mother country.

"The Declaration of Independence: A History"

The U.S. National Archives and Records Administration

Nations come into being in many ways. Military rebellion, civil strife, acts of heroism, acts of treachery, a thousand greater and lesser clashes between defenders of the old order and supporters of the new--all these occurrences and more have marked the emergences of new nations, large and small. The birth of our own nation included them all. That birth was unique, not only in the immensity of its later impact on the course of world history and the growth of democracy, but also because so many of the threads in our national history run back through time to come together in one place, in one time, and in one document: the Declaration of Independence.

http://www.archives.gov/exhibits/charters/declaration_history.html

"The Stylistic Artistry of the Declaration of Independence"

By Stephen Lucas

The Declaration of Independence is perhaps the most masterfully written state paper of Western civilization. As Moses Coit Tyler noted almost a century ago, no assessment of it can be complete without taking into account its extraordinary merits as a work of political prose style. Although many scholars have recognized those merits, there are surprisingly few sustained studies of the stylistic artistry of the Declaration. This essay seeks to illuminate that artistry by probing the discourse microscopically--at the level of the sentence, phrase, word, and syllable. By approaching the Declaration in this way, we can shed light both on its literary qualities and on its rhetorical power as a work designed to convince a "candid world" that the American colonies were justified in seeking to establish themselves as an independent nation.

http://www.archives.gov/exhibits/charters/declaration_style.html

The Significance of the American Revolution: Effects spilled beyond U.S. borders

The following article is taken from the U.S. Department of State publication, Outline of American History

The American Revolution had a significance far beyond the North American continent. It attracted the attention of a political intelligentsia throughout the European continent. Idealistic notables such as Thaddeus Kosciusko, Friedrich von Steuben, and the Marquis de Lafayette joined its ranks to affirm liberal ideas they hoped to transfer to their own nations.

<http://www.america.gov/st/educ-english/2008/April/20080407113229eaifas0.8799097.html>



Boy Scouts walk up Kimball Avenue in the Caldwell Fourth of July Parade Wednesday morning, July, 4, 2007, in Caldwell, Idaho. (AP Photo/Idaho Press-Tribune, Greg Kreller) ** MANDATORY CREDIT **

Fourth of July Music Reflects U.S. History, Diversity: Many composers have influenced annual Independence Day celebrations

By Lauren Monsen

The patriotic songs that have become staples of U.S. Independence Day celebrations reflect the nation's history and the contributions of immigrants to the country's diverse culture.

<http://www.america.gov/st/peopleplace-english/2008/June/20070605151427GLnesnoM0.9304315.html>

The Road to Independence; Rebellion that made a new nation

The following article is taken from the U.S. Department of State publication, Outline of American History

Throughout the 18th century, the maturing British North American colonies inevitably forged a distinct identity. They grew vastly in economic strength and cultural attainment; virtually all had long years of self-government behind them. In the 1760s their combined population exceeded 1,500,000 – a six-fold increase since 1700. Nonetheless, England and America did not begin an overt parting of the ways until 1763, more than a century and a half after the founding of the first permanent settlement at Jamestown, Virginia...

<http://www.america.gov/st/educ-english/2008/April/20080407113124eaifas4.009426e-03.html>



Facts for Features: The Fourth of July 2011

U.S. Bureau of Census

Source: http://www.census.gov/newsroom/releases/archives/facts_for_features_special_editions/cb11-ff13.html

The Fourth of July 2011

On this day in 1776, the Declaration of Independence was approved by the Continental Congress, setting the 13 colonies on the road to freedom as a sovereign nation. As always, this most American of holidays will be marked by parades, fireworks and backyard barbecues across the country.



(AP Photo/Al Grillo)

2.5 million

In July 1776, the estimated number of people living in the newly independent nation.

311.7 million

The nation's estimated population on this July Fourth.

Flags

\$3.2 million

In 2010, the dollar value of U.S. imports of American flags. The vast majority of this amount (\$2.8 million) was for U.S. flags made in China.

\$486,026

Dollar value of U.S. flags exported in 2010. Mexico was the leading customer, purchasing \$256,407 worth.

\$302.7 million

Annual dollar value of shipments of fabricated flags, banners and similar emblems by the nation's manufacturers, according to the latest published economic census data.

Fireworks

\$190.7 million

The value of fireworks imported from China in 2010, representing the bulk of all U.S. fireworks imported (\$197.3 million). U.S. exports of fireworks, by comparison, came to just \$37.0 million in 2010, with Japan purchasing more than any other country (\$6.3 million).

\$231.8 million

The value of U.S. manufacturers' shipments of fireworks and pyrotechnics (including flares, igniters, etc.) in 2007.

Patriotic-Sounding Place Names

Thirty-one places have "liberty" in their names. The most populous one as of April 1, 2010, is Liberty, Mo. (29,149) Iowa, with four, has more

of these places than any other state: Libertyville, New Liberty, North Liberty and West Liberty.

Thirty-five places have "eagle" in their names. The most populous one is Eagle Pass, Texas (26,248).

Eleven places have "independence" in their names. The most populous one is Independence, Mo. (116,830).

Nine places have "freedom" in their names. The most populous one is New Freedom, Pa. (4,464).

One place with "patriot" in the name. Patriot, Ind. (209).

Five places have "America" in their names. The most populous is American Fork, Utah (26,263).

Early Presidential Last Names

138

Ranking of the frequency of the surname of our first president, George Washington, among all last names tabulated in the 2000 Census. Other early presidential names that appear on the list, along with their ranking, were Adams (39), Jefferson (594), Madison (1,209) and Monroe (567).



The Brigade of the American Revolution perform a rifle salute, during the Independence Day celebration at Fort Laurens State Memorial in Bolivar, Ohio. (AP Photo /The Repository, Bob Rossiter)

The British are Coming!

\$98.3 billion

Dollar value of trade last year between the United States and the United Kingdom, making

the British, our adversary in 1776, our sixth-leading trading partner today.

Fourth of July Cookouts

More than 1 in 4

The chance that the hot dogs and pork sausages consumed on the Fourth of July originated in Iowa. The Hawkeye State was home to 19.0 million hogs and pigs on March 1, 2011. This estimate represents more than one-fourth of the nation's estimated total. North Carolina (8.6 million) and Minnesota (7.6 million) were also homes to large numbers of pigs.

6.8 billion pounds

Total production of cattle and calves in Texas in 2010. Chances are good that the beef hot dogs, steaks and burgers on your backyard grill came from the Lone Star State, which accounted for about one-sixth of the nation's total production. And if the beef did not come from Texas, it very well may have come from Nebraska (4.6 billion pounds) or Kansas (4.1 billion pounds).

6

Number of states in which the value of broiler chicken production was \$1 billion or greater between December 2009 and November 2010. There is a good chance that one of these states – Georgia, Arkansas, North Carolina, Alabama, Mississippi or Texas – is the source of your barbecued chicken.

Over 1 in 3

The odds that your side dish of baked beans originated from North Dakota, which produced

36 percent of the nation's dry, edible beans in 2010. Another popular Fourth of July side dish is corn on the cob. Florida, California, Georgia, Washington and New York together accounted for 68 percent of the fresh market sweet corn produced nationally in 2010.

Please Pass the Potato

Potato salad and potato chips are popular food items at Fourth of July barbecues. Approximately half of the nation's spuds were produced in Idaho or Washington State in 2010.

More than three-fourths

Amount of the nation's head lettuce production in 2010 that came from California. This lettuce may end up in your salad or on your burger.

7 in 10

The chances that the fresh tomatoes in your salad came from Florida or California, which combined accounted for 71 percent of U.S. fresh market tomato production last year.

Florida

The state that led the nation in watermelon production last year (750 million pounds). Other leading producers of this popular fruit included California, Georgia and Texas, each had an estimate of more than 600 million pounds.

81 million

Number of Americans who said they have taken part in a barbecue during the previous year. It's probably safe to assume a lot of these events took place on Independence Day.



(AP Photo/Las Cruces Sun-News, Norm Dettlaff)

THE FOURTH OF JULY: CELEBRATING U.S. INDEPENDENCE DAY

July 4th has been recognized as Independence Day in the United States ever since the country's Founding Fathers signed the Declaration of Independence on July 4, 1776. To mark the occasion, Americans celebrate with parades, fireworks, concerts and other festive activities.

The United States celebrates its Independence Day on July 4, a day of patriotic celebration and family events throughout the country. In the words of Founding Father John Adams, the holiday would be "the great anniversary festival. It ought to be commemorated as the day of deliverance. ... It ought to be solemnized with pomp and parade, with shows, games, sports, guns, bells, bonfires, and illuminations, from one end of this continent to the other, from this time forward forever more."

The Fourth of July holiday is a major civic occasion, with roots deep in the Anglo-American tradition of political freedom.

Throughout the United States, Fourth of July fireworks displays are popular, from the spectacular exhibition on the National Mall to more modest fireworks shows in city parks across the land. In New York City, Macy's department store sponsors what it bills as the nation's largest July 4 fireworks display. In 2010, the 30-minute show featured 40,000 shells launched from six barges afloat in the Hudson River. Macy's estimated that more than 3 million watched in person and that millions more has seen it on television.

"The Fourth" is a family celebration. Picnics and barbeques are common. July is summer in the United States, and millions of Americans escape the heat at beaches and other vacation spots. Independence Day is not among the legal holidays fixed on a Monday or Friday, but many employees use vacation time to create an extended weekend.



Cambria Spangler, right, makes her way along Caroline Street in Fredericksburg, Va., during the Sixth Annual Heritage Day Parade Wednesday, July 4, 2007, in Fredericksburg, Va. (AP Photo/The Free Lance-Star, Robert A. Martin)



(AP Photo/Tetona Dunlap)



Judy Brown, left, and her husband, Steve Cooke, listen to a speaker at an Independence Day celebration in Moscow, Idaho, on Friday, July 4, 2008. (AP Photo/Moscow-Pullman Daily News, Geoff Crimmins)

WHOLE PEOPLE exercising its first and SOVEREIGNTY, ORIGINAL and UNLIMITED."

The Fourth of July is a time when elected officials and other public figures often give speeches extolling American traditions and values.

Independence Day has provided some of this nation's most stirring words of freedom. In 1788, Founding Father James Wilson addressed a Philadelphia gathering that was possibly the largest July 4 celebration in the young nation's history. He exhorted his fellow citizens to ratify the proposed Constitution. "A people, free and enlightened," he said, "establishing and ratifying a system of government ... A greatest power -- performing an act of



JULY 4TH: FIREWORKS & FAMILY

From big cities like Washington to small towns like Stinking Creek, Tennessee (population 1,200), America's Independence Day, celebrated each year on July 4, would not be complete without fireworks.

The country's love of fireworks dates back to the American Revolution. John Adams, before being elected second president of the United States, wrote in July 1776 that America's Declaration of Independence from England ought to be celebrated with "bonfires and illuminations [fireworks] from one end of the continent to the other, from this day forward forevermore."

Fireworks are a \$940-million-a-year industry in the United States. More than 130 companies produce professional-quality fireworks



Fireworks explode over Boston harbor, Sunday, June 29, 2003, in Boston. Boston began its July 4th celebration with the special fireworks display called "Salute to the Troops." The show was recorded and will be broadcast over the Armed Forces Network to U.S. military personal stationed around the world. (AP Photo/Michael Dwyer)

displays, and thousands of retailers, from Wal-Mart to tiny roadside stands, sell fireworks to the public in the weeks leading up to the Fourth of July.



(AP Photo/Bloomsburg Press Enterprise, Jimmy May)

The industry is made up of small businesses: Even “major” display companies average only 25 year-round employees. (Companies hire hundreds of temporary staffers to help set off their July Fourth displays.) Recently, regulations have driven some small companies out of business. Relatively bigger ones employ as many as 10 people just to handle regulatory compliance. The regulatory environment changed dramatically after the September 11, 2001, attacks on the United States. “In 1969, when I got into this business, I could drive up and down the highway with eight or 10 boxes of fireworks in the bed of my pickup truck, and nobody cared,” said Lansden E. Hill Jr., president of Pyro Shows of LaFollette, Tennessee.

Now, it seems, everybody cares. A half dozen federal agencies, as well as state and local governments, tightly regulate shipment, storage, and handling of fireworks, requiring strict background checks and often multiple licenses for everyone who comes in contact with the explosives.



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